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THE
EVIDENCE
OF
REASON
IN PROOF OF THE
IMMORTALITY
OF THE
SOUL,

INDEPENDENT ON

The more abstruse Inquiry into the Nature
of MATTER and SPIRIT.

COLLECTED FROM THE
MANUSCRIPTS of Mr. BAXTER, *(a)*
Author of an INQUIRY into the NATURE of the HUMAN
Soul, and of MATHO. *K*

To which is prefixed

A LETTER from the EDITOR to the Reverend
Dr. PRIESTLEY.

L O N D O N:
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LETTER FROM THE EDITOR

TO

DR. PRIESTLEY.

REV. SIR,

DEEPLY interested, as you certainly are, with every friend to religion and virtue, in the rational establishment of the belief of a life to come, when this short scene is closed in death, you will, I trust, acknowledge the salutary tendency of the following production of a late eminent philosophical writer. It contains the most essential part of the evidence of reason, with respect to a future state, abstracted from the considerations which you are endeavouring to explode, of the distinction of the soul and body, the inertness of matter, and the sole agency of spirit. It is the earnest wish of the Editor to redeem a work of great merit, and of peculiar exigency to counteract some probable consequences of your

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present controversy, from the gulph of oblivion, to which, by the very imperfect state, in which it has remained for about thirty years, it appeared to have been consigned. Let his endeavours at least for a good purpose atone for the freedom of his address to the author of the *Disquisitions on Matter and Spirit*, which have been the immediate occasion of his offering the work at this time to the public.

The doctrine here illustrated can present to the mind of a good man, whose life is spent in the pursuit of truth, nothing but what is full of hope and comfort. It has rarely met with opposition, except from those, whose impious or immoral conduct the awful train of ideas, attendant upon the belief of the immortality of the soul, appears to regard with a menacing aspect. Yet it is this prime incentive to a religious and virtuous life, against which a zealous moralist, and assertor of the divinity of the Christian revelation, is now generally considered as a declared adversary. It is this inspiriting suggestion of nature, that a bold advocate for the free use of reason in points of faith is regarded as engaged to silence and discredit.

This charge is grounded not only upon your maintaining that the whole man becomes extinct at death, (a) but more es-

(a) *Disq. Pref. P. xiv.*

pecially

pecially upon your absolute rejection of all hope derived from natural reason of our surviving the grave. The arguments, which formerly induced you to believe the soul to be a principle essentially distinct from the body, being now deemed inconclusive, you are understood to renounce at the same time every other evidence, which human reason can possibly give in proof of it's immortality. You are aware that the men, who are the most distinguished for serious thinking, and regard to principle, are in general the most disposed to seek and embrace every argument from reason, as well as revelation, in proof of a future state: You are therefore prepared to expect that many persons of that character, sincere philanthropists, and friends of truth, should express their concern to see a writer of acknowledged merit and abilities, labouring, as they think, to extinguish the most benign ray of hope, which the merciful Author of nature has shed upon the mind of man.

Some of your severest censurers may, upon explaining the ground of their animosity against you, be found to have mistaken the drift of your late disquisitions. Shocked at your rejection of the light of nature, in the Inquiry into the reality of a life to come, they have, I think, too hastily considered you as asserting that reason directly militates against the belief of it. This assertion you will probably disclaim, as being no

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necessary consequence of your principles; the true intent of which appears to have been overstrained, as uncandidly, in this instance, as that of your peculiar theological system has been by another set of men, who pronounce it to imply an express renunciation of all faith in Christ. Inured, and callous to this unworthy treatment, you will not be concerned to hear, that some of them would be mightily pleased to proceed with you in the short way recommended by Dr. *Bentley*, for the "conversion of Deists, and Atheists. With this learned, but petulant critic, as all who could not regard the most questionable object of his criticism in the same light exactly that he did himself, were mere dolts and idiots; so all, who subscribed not implicitly to every article of his creed, were arrant Deists of course, and all who supposed it possible that matter could think, rank Atheists. In his second sermon at *Boyle's* Lectures, after ridiculing the notion that thought may be produced by the motion of the minute particles of matter; which he resembles to the grinding inanimate corn into living and rational meal, or the raising ebullitions of fancy in water, when boiled in a kettle, though before it was cold and phlegmatic; or supposing these particles of matter to have sense indeed and perception in themselves; but being sullen and refractory, to require, like men of the same tempers, to be banged and buffeted

buffeted into reason—after all this pointed pleasantry, it is in sober seriousness, the gentle Doctor adds,—“And indeed that way of argumentation would be most proper upon these atheistical Atomists themselves.” This instance of ill-tempered prejudice, in a man of great knowledge, might prepare you to excuse a narrowness of principle in less enlightened zealots, when they arraign the sincerity of a man, professing christianity, who declares he cannot conscientiously subscribe to their mode of explaining, what on all sides is confessedly inexplicable. Yet allow me to add, that in your *Illustrations of the doctrine of philosophical Necessity*, you seem to have wantonly provoked your friends, the Predestinarians, to fulminate against you their horrible charge of Innovation; by departing only from the old phraseology of those, with whom you actually agree in opinion. A real illustration of this abyss of darkness visible would be a novelty indeed. But this hopeless attempt I hope soon to see you give up, once for all, to the researches of the gloomy academics of *Milton's Pandæmonium*; and determine stedfastly to pursue your former happy track; to investigate, for the future, the power, wisdom, and goodness of God, in the works of nature.

Habituated, no less than Dr. *Priestley*, to a calm contempt for bigotry, in all its shapes, with a rooted aversion to the mean

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suggestions of a party-spirit, I humbly think myself animated with an equal zeal for the truth, whose interests are manifestly best promoted by an unlimited freedom of inquiry. Believe me then sincere in respecting the candour, with which you maintain opinions different from those, which, appearing to me to be established on solid grounds, will, I trust, receive no lasting injury from your objections. Our ideas are far indeed from coinciding with respect to that substance within us, which exerts it's faculties at this instant in dictating, or attending to the purport of this letter. The subsequent propositions in particular appear to me irreconcilable to sound philosophy; being utterly incapable of proof, in the nature of things.—“Active power, and spontaneity of thought are the proper attributes of body, and merely the result of it's *organization*, (or it's having parts instrumental in communicating motion to other parts, for that term, of mighty import, means no more.)—Sensation, understanding, will, are simply the effects of different modifications of matter.—An intelligent and moral agent is nothing else but such mere matter in motion.”

Imperfect as you often confess our idea of Matter to be, it might have been as well to stop somewhat short of these bold assertions, till you had more precisely ascertained that point. In the mean time you might have
advanced,

advanced, with greater security, upon the less exceptionable ground of Mr. *Locke's* hypothesis :—that “ created spirits, being both active and passive, are not totally separate from matter ;” or require a certain union, or correspondence with it, for the due determination of their active powers.— This may be admitted, without renouncing the received distinction of the two united substances. But when keeping up still this old distinction, he talks of *passive powers* in Matter, or ascribes to it the peculiar properties of Spirit, I am entirely at a loss to account for this apparent incongruity of ideas, in a writer so justly celebrated for precision. When, after all, he declares, that, “ the subject appears to him to exceed the bounds of human knowledge,” he compels me to applaud, and wish that all would imitate his modesty. A concession similar to this, you freely made yourself, when you first expressed a suspicion, that “ man does not consist of two principles, so essentially different as Matter and Spirit.” (b) You are inclined to think this, you say, though the subject is beyond our comprehension at present. This you only suspected then. You now inform the public, that you are entirely convinced of it. You have very lately told an opponent : “ There is but little reason to expect that any man, who has

(b) Introd. to Hartley's Theory.

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given the public his opinion upon any subject of importance, will ever retract it." (c) But, good Sir, we are persuaded better things of you, and things, that accompany sound sense and ingenuity, though you thus speak. If any conclusion favourable to the rejected notion of the natural immortality of the soul shall be found fairly deducible from certain principles, which you still acknowledge, you will, I believe, be readily brought to reconsider them, and their necessary consequences. May they prove a clue to conduct you back to a persuasion, which minds impressed, like yours, with the genuine stamp of virtue, have, in general, been the most inclined to cherish. " Truth, says the judicious *Wollaston*, is the offspring of thoughts often revised and corrected." Are we not called upon to revise and correct our thoughts with peculiar care before we presume to advance for truth any dispiriting conceit of our own, upon the constituent principles of human nature, a clear idea of which appears to have been purposely withheld from man, in his present state?

The ingenious Mr. *Cochius* of Berlin may amuse himself, inoffensively enough, in the magical robe of Leibnitz, by reviving his exploded *Monades*, or invisible elementary particles; which being neither matter, nor spirit themselves, are the only agents, or ef-

(c) Illustration of Phil. Necessity, p. 172.

ficients, in all the phænomena, or operations of both ; since he has been so kind to inform us, he can demonstrate, there will be no end of these incomprehensible agents within us. His brother academician, Mr. *Sulzer*, may innocently indulge his fancy in the notion that the visible body is only the cover of a more subtle organized substance, which is the seat of the soul ; since he supposes this *animated molecule*, as he calls it, to be not liable to perish, nor the soul itself to suffer any alteration of it's essential constitution by the dissolution of the visible body. The pretty amusement the gentleman takes in blowing bladders, and turning the gilded vapour into system, might only provoke our smile, if he had not pretended to derive more solid hope of surviving the grave, from this airy hypothesis, than from the arguments drawn from the consideration of the divine wisdom and goodness. A much better reasoner, the excellent Dr. *Hartley*, whose moral and religious character, I agree with you in esteeming very highly, had supposed before him, and without any possible ill effect, that there is an intermediate elementary substance between the mind and the gross body, which may exist, and be the instrument of pleasure and pain to the sentient principle after death. Before this your most admired philosopher, the astonishing genius of Bp. *Berkley* might, without injury to our dearest hopes,

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hope, divert itself with putting common sense to silence, by maintaining, with a subtlety of reasoning, never yet perhaps completely refuted, that the whole material world, every object of our senses, our own bodies not excepted, are ideas only existing in the mind. The good Bishop saw an ever-present Deity perpetually acting upon the soul of man, without the intervention of unthinking second causes. Death, in his notion, was but an instantaneous shifting of the scene by the hand of the prime Artist, or an introduction only of the incorruptible soul to a new set of perceptions.

Uncertain twilight, alas! if not impenetrable obscurity, equally veils the system, which excludes from the universe every thing but spirit, the hypothesis of three constituent parts in human nature; the notion generally received of two united principles, and the opinion of man's uniform consistence of simple matter; to which last, it seems, you have been led by Dr. *Hartley*, who was himself utterly averse from any such idea. In this general want of light, for the sake of honest truth, let opinion take it's free scope. Only let it not assume too soon the stile of certainty. You think the new theory of father *Boscovic*, and Mr. *Michel*, (d) is well calculated to elucidate this mysterious article of your philosophical

(d) Disq. Pref. P. xii.

creed. Yet one might expect you would not readily believe, that these gentlemen have the singular advantage, over all expounders of mystery, to dispel entirely the cloud of uncertainty, which has hitherto been found to involve it. Is it in the genuine spirit of philosophy, that you declare yourself already arrived at a *full persuasion*, an *entire conviction* of what you lately disbelieved, and so very lately ventured to entertain a *simple doubt* about, "that the mental powers are merely the result of an organical structure of the brain?"

Accustomed to an extensive range in the several regions of science, you must have been often sensibly struck with this obvious reflection: How comparatively small a share of certainty have the wisest men been able to obtain, with all their industry and sagacity, in the pursuit of speculative truth! The practical truths of most general utility, our kind Creator commonly presents to our minds, with an intuitive evidence, which we readily admit, as distinct and clear. You will not say, he has vouchsafed you any such evidence with respect to your present opinion; that "the soul of man being merely the result of his corporeal structure, the whole man is consequently extinct at death." Allow me, for your own sake, to wish, that, until you could make this claim, you had suspended the peremptory decision of the point, which you have pronounced
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in opposition to the general tenor of the judgments and affections of all thinking men. Here especially it might have been worth your while to recollect the constant conduct of a noble philosopher, distinguished by his unwearied attachment to your favourite studies, and as eminently entitled to use the positive stile. Mr. *Boyle* was always remarkably shy of laying down principles, or advancing without good proof, any opinion of his own upon subjects of abstruse, or uncertain speculation. "He envied not, he said, the applause bestowed upon those writers, who have taken upon themselves to deliver the causes of things, and explicate the mysteries of nature." Very seldom indeed does he speak with confidence upon any thing except plain matter of fact.

Though I find it impossible to withhold my assent to the force of Mr. *Baxter's* reasonings upon the immateriality of the soul, I am not insensible of the weight of certain difficulties, which render his proof, irresistible as it seems to me, incapable of yielding complete satisfaction to a mind, limited by nature, in it's operations here, to the instrumentality of matter. But a few difficulties advanced in opposition to solid argument I cannot in conscience allow to shake the foundation of my belief of any thing. Yet I dare not condemn the man as an obstinate sceptic, who confesses, with
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Mr. *Locke*, that "having given himself
 "leave to consider freely, and look into the
 "dark and intricate part of each hypothesis,
 "he can scarcely find his reason able to de-
 "termine for, or against the soul's existence,
 "and activity, independent of matter."

To the man, who, perplexed with all this
 darkness and intricacy, still persists in the
 unavailing pursuit, I would recommend the
 resting a while in the plain determination of
 common sense, though with the Doctors
Beattie and Co, he should incur your con-
 tempt for his deference to such mean autho-
 rity. It will tell him first, that, with every
 thinking being, he must perceive himself to
 have a real existence, distinct from the be-
 ings around him. It will next bid him
 draw this obvious conclusion from his dis-
 tinct existence, his continued consciousness,
 thought, and perception,—that, although
 death may throw this percipient being "out
 of it's present assortments, or compositions,"
 as you express it, the thinking substance it-
 self it will not, cannot annihilate. Not all
 the powers of Nature, even upon your hy-
 pothesis, extend to any thing beyond com-
 pounding and decomposing. With the
 substance, the primary qualities, or proper-
 ties essential to it, must remain, triumphant
 over the grave. Thus far common sense
 has carried him smoothly. Here it may
 leave him at a stand: While, on the one
 side,

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side, he hears perception, thought, activity represented as the primary qualities, or properties constituting the essence of his soul; these, on the other side, he hears you pronounce to be accidental or secondary qualities of his bodily substance. How shall he get out of this dilemma? Common sense has little to say to it. That same faculty of intuitive perception, which discerns, at one glance, the result of long examination, as her champions in the north would fain persuade us, will fail us now and then, where the less presumptuous researches of reason may succeed. Let him not be discouraged then, but renew his application to reason. She will now turn his eye from the track, in which he lost himself before, to one more bright and luminous. She will assure him,—and you, Sir, will be obligingly ready to second her welcome assurance,—that these qualities of thought and perception, be they primary or secondary qualities of spirit or matter, are removeable from either only by the same all-gracious will of our heavenly Father, who first united or superinduced them to one, or the other. When reason, and you have inspired him with a full confidence in this great leading truth; I think we may again restore him to the guidance of plain common sense, which will not fail to calm his fearful apprehensions; and with a clear
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conviction, that his being and well-being, and the continuance of them, are in good hands, will reconduct him soon into the paths of resignation and comfort.

With respect to the destination of a certain active, intelligent and moral principle within us to an immortal life after this, I trust that you and I, Sir, concur in cherishing the same delightful hope. You declare that your hypothesis does not, in your own breast, militate in the least against this hope. I most cheerfully congratulate you upon this frame of mind, without presuming to question, as your opponents have rashly done, the sincerity of your declaration, which is only known to the Almighty Searcher of hearts. It were greatly to be wished that all those, whom you have determined to embrace the doctrine of the materiality and mortality of the soul, might be enabled to view it in the same light that I believe you do yourself. It might then play upon their imaginations, with as little injury to their morals, and principles, or even their hope of immortality.

This inspiriting hope, though established in my heart upon grounds, less exposed to the conflicts of metaphysical disputation, receives, I confess, additional strength from the persuasion that the sentient and thinking principle within me is not by nature liable to perish at the death of the body. Some natural horrors arising in the mind, upon
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the apprehended decay, or approaching dissolution of it's earthly tabernacle, are greatly relieved by this persuasion. The convincing evidence, produced by Dr. *Boerhaave* and Baron *Haller*, that every particle of the human body, solid as well as fluid, is in a continual flux, or frequently cast off, raises an anxious desire to conceive, wherein consists the *identity* of the moral and intelligent being which animates it. Of this there appears to be no possibility of forming the least idea, without supposing the invisible agent to be something exempt from corruption, or not liable to this frequent dispersion of parts; something, in short, substantially distinct from all these fleeting particles. From the impossibility indeed of our conceiving this, we must not compliment our own understanding so far, as to insist that it cannot be. But without presuming to set bounds to the power of the Author of nature, we may securely deny that God has annexed *thought* to *matter*, if these two ideas be found absolutely incompatible. An argument to prove them compatible I think as unlikely to be ever produced, as an intelligent piece of clock-work of human invention. Upon the ideas of an immaterial substance within us, it's action and passion, and the hold it has upon the body, many insolvable difficulties may be started. But in these ideas no absolute inconsistency can be discerned; as there appears to be in the

former. With respect to the *Identity* at least of the intelligent principle we may venture confidently to affirm, that admitting your present doctrine, that it resides merely in the similar composition of parts numerically different, the author of the *Disquisitions on Matter and Spirit*, cannot possibly be the same person with him, who, "educated in the very straitest principles of reputed orthodoxy, was zealous for every tenet of the system."

You have indeed expressly told us, that "all things material are not liable to corruption, and that even a human body may be wholly exempt from it, though those, we have at present, are not (e)." You have said before, that "a certain quantity of nervous system is necessary to such complex ideas and affections, as belong to the human mind (f)."—i. e. such complex vibrations of corporeal particles as we ignorantly deem ideas and affections of the mind, or of a substance distinct from the body. Had your hypothesis been so framed, as to admit that a portion of *nervous system*, sufficient to all the sensations and ideas of the human soul, actually existing in every individual man, is composed of such matter as you allow to be not liable to corruption, the keen edge of opposition, of animosity at least, against your doctrine of its materiality, would in a great measure be taken off. But this concession

(e) Page 101.

(f) Page 87.

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would not have been quite consistent with the notion of it's mortality, for which you principally contend.

You have however made another concession, which appears to be no less favourable to the natural immortality of man, and his personal identity in a future state. "Death, you say, with it's concomitant putrefaction, and dispersion of parts, is only a *decomposition*; and whatever is decomposed, may be recomposed by the Being, who first composed it: And I doubt not, but that, in the proper sense of the word, the same body, that dies, shall rise again; not with every thing, that is adventitious, and extraneous; as all we receive by nutrition, but with the same *stamina*, or those particles, that really belonged to the germ of the organical body. *And there can be no proof, that these particles are ever properly destroyed, or interchanged(g).*" Together with this property of remaining unchanged and entire, after death, which you are disposed to allow to these stamina, or this original germ, if you could but be persuaded to grant us those of consciousness, perception, thought; your doctrine about the soul's extension, figure and materiality, would appear at once to have lost it's formidable aspect. Will you excuse me, if I presume to add that, with it's terrors, it may thus appear to have lost it's whole im-

(g) Page 161.

portance;

portance; especially since the ideas, which you chuse to annex to the word, *Matter*, excluding those untoward qualities of inertness, impenetrability and solidity, include those of attraction, repulsion, activity, together with the rest of those, which have generally been ascribed to *Spirit*.

I have no ambition to engage in a controversy upon a point of dim speculation, from which I see no likelihood, that any ray of comfort will ever spring, to enlighten this low sphere; but which I believe reserved, among other objects of higher import, for that stage of our existence, which, I trust, will certainly succeed it. It was therefore with little satisfaction, that I lately heard a very able, and worthy friend of yours is preparing to enter the lists with you, in opposition to your doctrines of Materialism, and Philosophical Necessity. With every friend of science, I think myself interested in seeing you fairly rid of the dispute. Possessed with a real esteem for a writer, whose works bear unquestionable marks of an honest zeal for the prevalence of truth, I have often felt no small indignation, upon hearing a suspicion of atheism, and unbelief in a future state, publicly expressed against him; though a strenuous asserter of the divinity of the christian revelation, and the general doctrine of the resurrection of the dead.

The resentment, which you may have felt yourself, at these unjust reproaches, will, upon reflection, subside into pity for the weak brethren, whom your doctrines have unhappily occasioned to stumble. This will naturally prompt you to obviate, with a scrupulous attention for the future, every such occasion, which may lead superficial readers to misconstrue the tendency of your opinions, to their own detriment. May I be permitted here to drop a hint, that it may perchance remind you likewise to be careful of ever falling yourself into a practice, unbecoming the character of a professed champion for the truth; that of torturing the expressions of an adversary, into the avowal of consequences abhorrent from his real meaning. If upon recollection it shall appear, that you have unconsciously dealt thus, in your strictures upon a respectable advocate for the church establishment, your ingenuous acknowledgment of the mistake would redound to the honour of religion, and literature. To the disgrace, alas! of literary men, of the partizans, especially of religious sects, on all sides, the most pitiful shifts are often used to render the doctrine of an opponent odious, by inveighing vehemently against a conclusion, supposed to be tacitly implied in it, which the astonished writer himself never dreamt of, and openly disavows. Your resolution to answer all misrepresentations of this sort, with

with silent contempt is certainly right. It is indeed scarce possible for a sensible man, not to take a lesson, from the general ridicule, which befell poor *Rousseau*, upon his woful appeals to the public, against the fancied rage of his persecutors, and the dull impertinence of the Dutch, French, and Swiss Journalists. All persecution here, upon the score of opinion, you may securely set at defiance. It will neither expose you to be stifled in the damps of a dungeon, to be starved with hunger, nor to be burnt alive, as was the fate of *Herport*, of *Castellio*, of *Servetus*, in a land too of Protestantism, and boasted liberty. Your destiny may, to some minds, appear scarce less horrible than any of these; to be branded as a man of no principle, the professed teacher of a religion, of which you believe not a single article. Contemptible as you may justly hold such an imputation as this, would it not be something less displeasing to you, that no one should stumble upon this rock of offence? Pardon the officiousness of one, who cannot regard it with quite the same indifference that you do, if he attempts to remove it a little out of the way.

While infidels of the most flagitious cast are described as pluming themselves with your accession to their party, I will venture to become a sponsor for your steady adherence to one prime article of faith, that the Author of our being, and Sovereign Ruler of

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our present state, is the sole disposer of it's future destiny. In this, I trust, that you, and all true theists will readily agree, whether with you, they suppose the soul of man to be material; or believe, with me, that it's immateriality has been demonstrated; or whether, with *Berkeley*, they consider matter as a mere unmeaning term, unless annexed to a collection of sensible qualities, subsisting only in the mind of some percipient; they must all unanimously regard the life, duration, and capacity of thinking in the human soul, as ultimately dependent upon the will alone of the Almighty God, who called it forth into existence. The believers therefore in a wise and beneficent Father of the universe have no great reason to be alarmed for the issue of the present controversy. To many of them perhaps it may, upon due consideration, appear to be almost as uninteresting a disquisition, as many an insignificant wordy war of fierce Polemics, who after setting the learned world at odds for a season, now sleep unnoticed, amidst their kindred cobwebs. They may say, they think it utterly unavailing to dispute, whether man be immortal, by divine grace, or by nature; by the miraculous interposition of a particular providence, or the regular established laws of eternal Wisdom; at the day of general resurrection, or immediately at the separation of the soul and body. Though to them the hypo-

hypothesis of their natural immortality recommends itself, as more consonant to reason, they may have candour enough to acknowledge that revelation seems to have left that point undecided, while with less true judgment perhaps, than subtlety, it has been drawn to favour either side of the question by turns. Religion, they may add, has no interest in it at all: It is only concerned to establish our belief, that being constituted moral agents here, we are destined to be called hereafter to a strict account of our present conduct, and in a life to come to be made happy or miserable accordingly, and in such manner as eternal justice and wisdom shall decree.

You appear, Sir, disposed to believe that in the human system, the particular laws of God, never clash or interfere with the general. I am always glad to catch at any avowed tenet of a man, whose understanding and moral character I respect, that may serve as a link, to draw our different opinions to a nearer degree of conformity. Though I may not venture to stretch my slender faculties to that "*one great, comprehensive law, which you imagine will be found to govern all the various phænomena in the material and intellectual world;*" yet I think I can discern one sense, in which we both harmoniously consent to the doctrine of the natural immortality of the human soul, though we may differ a little in the manner of

of maintaining the ground of our consent.—We both agree, with all consistent theists, in resolving every thing in the natural and material, as well as the moral and spiritual world, into the will of the supremely wise and beneficent Creator.—We are both convinced that to establish in the heart of man a firm belief of his existence after death, the surest ground of confidence is the divine authority.—We both, with gratitude, acknowledge it to be the peculiar privilege of christians to say “*We know, (we are certain, from the express declaration of God’s holy word) that if our earthly house of this tabernacle were dissolved, we have a building of God, a house not made with hands, eternal in the heavens.*” We both, I hope, rejoice alike in the evidence which reason, as well as revelation, affords, that all the strange confusion, and irregularity, we discern in the visible system, or the moral view of human life, has a plain reference to a future invisible world, *wherein dwelleth righteousness.*

The force of evidence, which induces us to an agreement of belief in these respects, you know full well is rejected by numerous tribes of pretended rationalists, upon whom, no arguments derived from sacred authority, or the credibility of human testimony, in regard to any thing which appears above the ordinary course of nature, are likely to have the least effect. We behold with great, but various degrees of compassion, those unhappy

happy persons, who renounce a revelation, enforced upon our minds by the most powerful sanctions, and endeared to our affections by it's beneficent tendency. For some of these you express a generous wish; "to a few really thinking, and intelligent unbelievers, you hope to do the greatest good, by bringing them to a conviction of the reasonableness and truth of christianity."

(b) Every christian must applaud the benevolent intention of a believing philosopher, who labours sincerely to persuade his unbelieving brethren to embrace the gospel tidings of life and immortality. May the blessing of heaven so regulate your future endeavours, as to render them effectual in putting a stop to the growth of infidelity. But could there, after all, be a more fatal aggravation of the evil of infidelity, than it's acquiring additional strength to undermine the grand support of sound morality, the belief of a life to come? What prospect you may have, in the devious track, you are now pursuing, of converting infidels to this belief, is beyond my power of discernment, especially when, upon expressing the laudable ambition abovementioned, you say, almost in the same breath, that "conclusions contrary to all natural appearances will never be admitted by philosophical unbelievers to be true (i). Is it for the conversion of

(b) Pref. p. 17. (i) lb. p. 18.

such free thinkers as these that you desire to see this perishable body considered as the whole man, and all the evidence of natural reason in proof of a future state rendered insignificant and null? To my common share of apprehension, their conversion would appear more likely to be brought about by arguments drawn from the opposite quarter, and tending to prove the natural immortality of the soul.

It would not, I confess, be to any laboured proof of the immateriality of the soul, that I should endeavour to engage their attention in a first attempt to lead them to the truth. At the opening of a conference with minds unnaturally warped to the opinion of their final extinction at death, I conceive the topics exhibited by *Mr. Baxter* in the following treatise, might, upon many accounts, be more successfully applied than the former. His demonstration of the immaterial nature of a thinking substance might have a better chance for their reception, when their prejudices were removed, and their minds enlightened by arguments applied more home to their hearts. The solid basis of that demonstration, will, I believe, be found unshaken still. I have even some hope to hear *Dr. Priestley* himself one day acknowledge, with his usual candour, that the opinion he has lately conceived of it's futility was ill-grounded, and that in prosecuting his metaphysical inquiries,

quiries, he is at length satisfied, that neither the material, nor the immaterial part of the universal system is superfluous. Finding the difficulties, which encumber every attempt to explain the actual, or positive essence of *Matter*, as great at least as those which he now thinks peculiar to the idea of *Spirit*, he may ingenuously confess, it might have been as well to have stuck to the old definitions of either term. In this case, it is not probable he should hesitate long, to which of the two substances he should attribute the properties of activity, perception, and spontaneity of thought. In the mean time, whatever may be the progress, or issue of the dispute, I shall observe it with silent attention, without being tempted to interrupt the tranquillity of my approach to the verge of that state, where it is our pleasing hope, that all philosophical, as well as theological doubts and difficulties will be removed, or create no longer any disturbance to the spirit of man.

Upon the rise of the contest about the materiality of the soul, I conceived a desire of offering one last service to the public, as a farewell token of regard to a good cause. I wished to see the attention of the public diverted from a dispute, which, in the apprehension of many well-meaning persons, threatened great mischief to the moral world, though in the judgment of others, equally well-intentioned, but little injury

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injury to the manners or sentiments of men was deemed likely to ensue from a controversy, of which scarce one in twenty of those, who at this day pass for learned men, have ever properly considered the first principles. With respect to those few, who have leisure to examine, or capacity to comprehend, with due precision, what are the real positions, which you have laid down, concerning the nature of Matter and Spirit, and are so happy, at the same time, as to rejoice, with you, in the light, which the gospel sheds on life and immortality; the entertainment, they will find in your ingenious Disquisitions, may be attended with no detriment to their moral or religious principles. But for the sake of those multitudes, whose faith in a future state may chance to reel, if they shall imbibe your doctrine in their weaker heads; or whose infidelity may triumph, upon your exploding our antiquated notions of spirit, soul, or immaterial substance; I studied to place in a clear and striking light, the arguments, which natural reason suggests in proof of a life to come, from the faculties of the human mind; from the moral law, written by the finger of God in the heart of man, and the voice of conscience, enforcing our observance of it; from the relation, in which we stand to the Creator and Supreme Ruler of the universe; from his known perfections, in short,

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considered respectively to the present state of his intelligent subjects upon earth.

In the prosecution of the work, I had my eye upon two sets of adversaries to this all-cheering light of nature, of contradictory principles to each other, and agreeing in nothing else but their opposition to the dictates of reason. One tribe disowns the authority of revelation, whose rage against it is really, though not avowedly, owing to the divine sanction it gives to the testimony of human reason in proof of a future state. They imagine themselves concerned, it seems, to drown the voice of reason, and render divine truth itself precarious, from the dread of certain alarming truths, which conscience presses home to their reluctant breasts. The other tribe depreciates the evidence of reason, with respect to all their religious notions, under a pretence of vindicating the superior excellence and dignity of revelation: And some of them particularly are excited to interest themselves warmly in the same cause with the former, as they maintain certain positions, which not being able to reconcile to reason, they are unwilling to submit to the test of it. It was with some concern, that I found myself obliged to consider a zealous advocate for the divine authority of the gospel, a contender, at the same time, for the untroubled use of reason, as the declared associate of these wretched opponents of the

two

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two sacred lights, with which the Almighty Father has blessed the children of men. Allowing that of nature to be the lesser light, with respect to the point in question, I considered human reason as weak and dim, and liable to gross perversion. Distracted by superstition, blinded by ignorance, it lost, in a great degree, the knowledge of several other natural suggestions, besides that of a future state. But it seemed to me to derogate no more from the credit of the christian revelation to say it promulgated afresh this prime dictate of unperverted reason, than it does to say, that it stamped the authority of a divine sanction upon the fundamental article of our faith, the unity of the Godhead, when this original principle of natural religion was obscured, or disregarded, by a degenerate or inconsiderate race of mortals.

Whilst I was engaged in preparing for the press a treatise composed upon the foregoing plan, (*k*) the worthy son of a writer, whose eminent abilities, and integrity of principles, conspicuous throughout all his works, reflect real honour upon his age and country, was pleased to put into my hands, a collection of manuscripts upon the same subject, written at different times by his late father. This fortunate incident has enabled me to prosecute my design,

(*k*) Alexander Baxter, Esq; of Odiham, Hants.

with a prospect of better success, by arranging, and digesting his arguments, into a form somewhat more regular, and conclusive, than his last lingering illness had permitted him to do himself. Great attention and care have been applied in this attempt to do justice, in some degree, to the admirable effusions of so wise, and good a man, whose reputation, already well established, will, I doubt not, recommend them to public notice, and accomplish the end he had in view, more effectually than any original production, of one but little known. A strong and pleasing light will be found to be here thrown upon the most important of all human concerns, from various topics selected with judgment, and displaying great accuracy, and learning. So rich a fund of interesting truth will not, it is hoped, lose much of it's intrinsic value, with a judicious reader, from any unskilful management of the Editor. The stile and manner, though retouched throughout, where it was most requisite, may probably still appear to many readers, rather uncouth and dry. To these, a lighter work, in a more fashionable garb, and less replete with solid sense, might have been more entertaining. It is unhappily in that more acceptable form, that such readers commonly receive the poison, against which the proper antidote is here administered without disguise, or specious colouring.

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The

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The arguments here advanced in support of the evidence of natural reason being more level to common apprehension, and applied more home to the heart, than his very acute, but more abstracted proof of the immateriality of the soul, are manifestly better calculated for general use. The immutable perfections of the Creator are here represented as engaged to perpetuate thought and consciousness in his moral creature, man. Be the conscious, thinking substance what it will, the certainty of it's continued existence is thus evinced from principles more unquestionable than the positive or negative properties of matter, or spirit. Let it once be allowed to imply no contradiction to suppose that infinite power should annex intelligence and consciousness to any certain combination, or modification of material particles, it may readily be granted that no greater power is required to maintain these properties annexed for ever to what he could thus create, and thus endow. The mortality of the soul is therefore by no means consequent upon it's materiality. The latter I humbly conceive to be a matter of opinion, utterly incapable of proof; and the former to be disproved in this work, with a force of reasoning above confutation. If, with the blessing of God, it shall become serviceable in convincing the Infidel tribes of modern pretenders to philosophy,

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of the reality of a future state; it's success will not fail to be pleasing to you, whose profession, I am persuaded, is very sincere, that you have interested yourself with zeal and diligence in their conversion. You have shewn a truly philosophical spirit in acquainting the world by what progress you have proceeded from a suspicion, to a re-examination, and then to a rejection of some of your former opinions. He has, in truth, made little improvement in the right application of his rational faculties, to whom the like has not happened more than once; while he, who can readily make such an acknowledgment, plainly shews his advances in the road to wisdom are not inconsiderable. Permit me therefore to say, that I will not despair to hear Dr. *Priestley* acknowledge that he has been a little too hasty in declaring that from natural reason, "*we have absolutely no hope of surviving the grave.*"

The venerable Bishop of *Carlisle*, and the ingenious Archdeacon of *Cleveland*, who preceded you in countenancing the opinion, you now entertain, about Matter and Spirit, will probably join with you in making the following concession,—that it concerns not the present enquiry to consider whether the future period of our existence shall be immediately consequent upon the apparent separation of the soul from the body, or deferred to a determinate point of time, the

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distance of which, however variously remote, must of course be equally imperceptible to all, who are supposed not to retain the least consciousness of their existence, during the intervening season. I am, ,

REV. SIR,

Your sincere Well-wisher,

and Fellow-Christian,

J. DUNCAN,

South Warmborough,
Sept. 29, 1778.

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278, 7th l. of note,	nothing	<i>r.</i>	any thing
299, l. 16,	is	<i>r.</i>	are
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THE
EVIDENCE, &c.

INTRODUCTION.

 HETHER man is to be something after death, or nothing, is an inquiry deserving his most serious thought and application, the most momentous indeed that can concern him.

Both sides, or suppositions in this inquiry, being to be examined, instead of going directly into the consideration of matter, motion, figure, perception, thought, reflection, &c. as is ordinarily done in treating of this subject; it is here proposed to consider especially, for which of the two his present make and constitution seem to have been most adapted by Almighty God. For if an intelligent and wise Being was the Author of our nature; and if we find our

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nature

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nature more fitted for the one than the other of these suppositions, it should determine us to conclude that supposition true, rather than the other; with a security of not being in the wrong, equal to the certainty there is of an intelligent wise Being's having been the Author of this our nature and constitution.

In doing this, let it be allowed to frame the argument, to a certain degree at least, according to the method of the mathematicians, not so much because it is here pretended that full demonstration can be given in this point, as because this is the clearest easiest way to communicate such demonstration as it will admit. By the advantages of this method we best pursue the truth ourselves, and best communicate it to others. It keeps us upon our guard, and prevents, as far as method can do, our being first deceived ourselves, and in consequence deceiving others. For by it we are obliged to put every proposition beyond the reach of controversy, before we leave it; and we have then the advantage of using it with confidence and safety afterward, as occasion requires, without distracting our thoughts from the present proof. Having thus but one thing under consideration at once, we are more likely to determine exactly about it, than if our views were divided. A slip may still be committed through inattention, which the learned will correct, and the candid

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candid forgive, if it does not affect the whole design. They will peruse an attempt of this kind with favour, and see it succeed with pleasure. Readers of a contrary disposition will find fault of course, to gratify their vanity, and vindicate their practice.

Before we begin our attempt to examine the reasons for and against either side, let it be observed that we feel in ourselves a strong and invincible desire to continue our being; and that this insatiable appetite of existing, which prevents all our thoughts and reasonings on this head, is the real, though unnoticed spring of all our actions, and twisted with our nature as thinking beings. How came we by this appetite? Who gave it us; and to what end? Was it given us to deceive us, to influence our reasonings in this point, and to make us mistake our true end? Or was it given us to point out the affirmative of the inquiry previous to all our own reasoning, to direct us what to think in this matter, in case we should never employ our reasoning faculty in the search of it, to be an innate demonstration of the side we ought to chuse? When all our other appetites carry along with them visible design, and advantage to us, it is utterly incredible that this should have been given us for the purpose of illusion only.

SECTION I.

The Existence of an all-perfect First Cause.

PROPOSITION.

THERE is a necessarily existing Being, infinite in all perfections, who is the Author of all Being else: or, there is a supreme, self-existent Creator of all things, who is possessed of all possible power, knowledge, wisdom, truth, justice, goodness: So that greater perfection than there is in this Being is contradictory and impossible.

This might be supposed, or taken for granted; since it has been as fairly demonstrated as any truth the mind is capable of perceiving; and since every one, by the free use of his own faculties, may most easily come to the conviction of it. For the being satisfactorily convinced of this truth requires fewer præcognita than to be convinced of any other truth whatsoever, metaphysical, moral, or mathematical, unless it be that of our own existence: So that it is our own fault and shame, if we have any scruples lying on our own mind against it; nor can we be fitted to judge of the arguments in the present inquiry, without a clear conviction of it, any more than to
judge

judge of the goodness of a demonstration in numbers, without the knowledge of the previous truths, which such demonstration supposes known. The reader who may want to see a regular proof and demonstration of this leading truth more at large, is particularly referred, among many others, to Dr. *Cudworth's* Intellectual System of the Universe, Dr. *Clarke's* Demonstration of the Being and Attributes of God, and Mr. *Wollaston's* Religion of Nature delineated, which cannot fail to afford complete satisfaction to the rational inquirer. The proof is briefly here drawn up in that form which may render it of most use for convenient reference, in the following inquiry.

The inquiry into the immortality of the soul supposes the origination of things, and the nature of the first Being known; we must begin therefore with that: and we may come to the knowledge of this in the following manner. I consider that something or other, some Being, must have existed from all eternity; that either some one, or more Beings, or some succession of Beings, is necessary, and eternal. For there are some things in being just now; that is certain; the man who denies it is something: these must have been eternal, or a succession of them must have been eternal; or, if their succession had a commencement, their first cause must have been eternal. This must be so, since otherwise, if

once nothing at all existed, no Being could ever have come into existence: for an effect cannot be without a cause; nor could the first thing effected have caused itself; that is to suppose it to be and not to be at once. Besides, eternity and immensity (infinite space I mean) are things to which production, or causation, cannot be applied without a contradiction. These therefore are necessary; and hence a necessity arises for some real Being, of which they are the affections. For eternity and immensity are not Beings, but predicable concerning some Being. Or if we say there was an infinite and eternal non-existence, that is, an infinite and eternal nothing, we ascribe two positive and real properties, and those necessary and the greatest of all others, infinity and eternity, to nothing; which is a contradiction.

2. It will not be said that the present things which we see, the present generation, for instance, of men and animals, are eternal: And that there hath not been an eternal succession of these, of such things, to wit, as were first effects and then causes; but that there hath been some one Being, or Beings, uncaused, or uneffected by any thing else, will appear, if we consider, That to say there neither is, nor ever was any thing but what was effected, is to make an universality of effects without a cause; or to make all things effects; which, upon being considered,

dered, is contradictory. For effect and cause are necessarily relative of each other, and either necessarily infers the other. To say there hath been an infinite succession of effects and causes is neither better nor worse than to say there hath been an infinite succession of effects only. For here every cause is confessedly effected, and could not have been a cause but by being supposed first an effect; therefore all is effect and no cause properly speaking; since effected causes are first effects, and carry more in their nature of effect than of cause, and afford no satisfactory answer in the inquiry where the first cause, or effecting power, is sought after. Thus then when we suppose all things effects, we are forced at the same time to suppose something not included in this All, but different from all things, which was itself no effect, but a cause: so that such a supposition hath in it the contradiction of the necessity of supposing that all things are less than all. This truth is finely illustrated by Mr. *Wollaston* to this purpose. In an eternal succession of effects, or all depending upon one another, every step of it is effect, by supposition; therefore such an infinity of effects is equal to one infinite effect, which is so far from being possible to exist without a cause, that it requires one infinitely more than one single effect would. This he familiarly illustrates in the instance of the chain hung down from heaven. For

to say that every link is suspended by that immediately above it, which itself wants also to be suspended: and that because there is an infinity of things that thus want to be kept up, therefore the whole needs nothing to keep it up, is but a multiplying of the absurdity. Therefore some uncaused Being is necessary; or a first cause of all effects is necessary.

3. It must be the first cause of things that is necessary; since any other assignable cause, a second, or a third cause, must be itself but an effect, and so point out an equal necessity of a first cause still. And it is very unskilful to think, or disingenuous to contend, that any multiplication of intermediate causes, since they are all but effects, which, like a channel, convey down the first causation through themselves, can supersede the necessity of a first cause. On the supposition that it were proved that matter cannot move itself, if one should ask, What moved such a body, or parcel of matter as he saw in motion? It might indeed be answered, such another body: but since matter, by concession, could not move itself, this would but make him more desirous to know what cause different from matter it was that first impressed the motion. Now it would be ridiculous, and trifling, to say, that though it is true matter cannot move itself, yet the motion which he perceived was communicated to that body, through

through an infinite number of bodies, without any thing immaterial to cause it. For this would be just the same as to say, that though matter cannot move itself, yet it may be moved without any thing else to move it. And to say that, for want of a first body in this infinite number, on which the impressiion was originally to be made, the motion was never first impressed by something immaterial, would be the same as to say that, though all matter necessarily wants something that is not matter to be a mover; yet I will make a supposition, wherein it shall not want any such thing: or I suppose it wants no such immaterial mover. And this again, in plain sense, is precisely saying, I will make a supposition contrary to reason and the necessity of things. This is a sophistical artifice of putting off a cause that is necessary, to an infinite distance of time, or of place, and thence concluding that it is not necessary. This might hold as well with respect to one body, as to an infinite number of bodies. For it might be said that the body, which I see moving, could not move itself; but in regard it was moving on from all eternity, and through the immensity of space, it was moved by no other thing. This would be only a trifling with words. To allow a thing to be an effect, but to deny that it was effected ever, or at any time, would be to allow and deny the same thing

thing at once. The necessary cause of things then, and the first cause of things must be the same.

4. Since this cause is the first cause, and therefore not an effect of any thing else, being itself unoriginated, it must be self-existent, or its existence must be of itself, and the first thing conceivable in its nature, when it is considered absolutely, and without respect to being a cause. And therefore it exists necessarily, or it could never not exist. For if it had not been self-existent, and existed always and necessarily, it could not have come into existence, but by being an effect of some prior cause: but it is the first cause, and no effect. It is necessary, therefore, not only with relation to its effects, which could not have existed without it, but absolutely and in itself. Therefore, the necessary cause of Being is a necessarily existing Being. And we have one such Being, at least, as was sought for. We see first the necessity of its existence that it may be a cause: and from its being the first cause, we see the necessity of its existence absolutely. These two necessities are not different, nor the perfections of different Beings, but when considered attentively appear to meet, and be one and the same necessity. Yet they may be considered as different, till the unity of this Being is established, which will force us to conceive them but one.

5. More-

5. Moreover, when we consider the import of self-existence or necessary existence, we find the conception of it is such, that the supposition of its non-existence is contradictory and repugnant. For the supposing it at any time not to have existed, is still bringing it back to the nature of Beings that were once effected. But this is against the conception of a self-existent Being, that could never want existence, or receive it from another. Or if we consider that what exists necessarily hath existed eternally, it follows that its existence eternally prevented all possibility of non-existence; so that its non-existence is, and was eternally impossible, and the supposition of it the supposition of a thing contradictory.

6. The nature of the arguments for necessity of existence is such, that they are applicable only to the existence of one Being. One indeed they prove necessary; but there they end: and reason being thus satisfied, to inquire if there may be yet another Being necessary, is to inquire if a thing may not be necessary without reason or necessity. Hence our idea of a second, necessarily existing Being, must be inconsistent with itself. Should our confused imagination endeavour to couple together the ideas of possibility and necessity thus—perhaps, or possibly a second being may be necessarily existent, we must be a little more explicit, to clear this mistake. Here the

scale ascends thus, first, impossibility of existence, or a necessity of non-existence. Secondly, mere possibility of existence; and thirdly, impossibility of non-existence, or necessity of existence: And of these three none is predicable of another. Now let us consider this proposition, there may possibly exist a second necessarily existent Being, and we shall find it inconsistent. For possible existence implies neither a contradiction to exist, nor not to exist. Being indifferent to existence or non-existence, it cannot exist necessarily. In a word, that there should be only no contradiction that it should exist, is entirely inapplicable to a necessary Being, whose conception implies a manifest contradiction that it should not exist. Thus we infer the inconsistency of all arguments for a second necessary Being.

* 7. The unity of a necessarily existent Being, may be more directly established thus. All the affections of necessary existence are necessary; since it is not, nor ever was indifferent that they should be so or otherwise; but precisely necessary that they should have always been what they are. Limitation of existence, or of perfection, can be no affection of the necessarily existent Being, as whatever could limit existence, must be non-existence, which is manifestly inconsistent with the idea of necessary existence. The necessary Being therefore is unlimited, and consequently one:

one: For two unlimited Beings are not only not necessary, but not consistent. Let it be here observed, that having our thoughts always conversant about limited and imperfect natures, and rarely with the necessary origin of all Nature and Being, we contract an universal prejudice that there may, beyond all being, be an infinity of non-existence. Our absurd idea, when truly expressed, amounts to this: There seems to be abundant room for two necessary Beings: And that for this wise reason: Because positive nature and existence is but small in comparison of the vast blank beyond it. This common, but irrational prejudice, has rendered the unity, unlimitedness, and all the perfections of the Deity, consequent upon his necessity, difficult to be apprehended by us, and is indeed the great stumbling block in philosophy, which yet is founded on this plain contradiction, the ascribing infinity to non-existence, and finitude to the supreme cause of all beings.

8. Thus the necessarily existing Being is one, or there can be but one such. The next question is, If matter be this Being, or if it be material? And that it is not we may be satisfied, from what was said in No. 1. For immensity is something real and positive, being the same thing as infinite extension, or expansion; and it implies a contradiction that it should be caused or effected: for before the supposed production

production of it, pure expansion was necessary. Nor can it be supposed more, or less, or passive from any thing, or liable to change, or divisible or moveable. Nor can it be said to be nothing: infinite expansion or extension is a real property; and therefore of something; nothing having no properties. And it is not a Being; but the affection of Being (*a*). Therefore it must belong to the necessarily-existing Being. But matter is not this immense Being; for it is not immense, nor infinitely extended; since otherwise there could be no motion (*b*), nor could bodies of equal bulk differ in weight (*c*); nor, if moved with equal velo-

(*a*) See, in the letters which passed between Dr. Clarke and Mr. Leibnitz, relating to the principles of natural philosophy and religion, Dr. Clarke's fourth reply, §. 7, 8, 9, 10, and 11; and fifth reply, §. 54; as also §. 2, 3, 4, and 5, of his third reply.

(*b*) As this is plain, so *Lucretius* hath very well expressed it:

——— Namque est in rebus INANE —
Quod si non esset, nulla ratione moveri
Res possent; namque officium, quod corporis extat,
Officere atque obstare, id in omni tempore adesset
Omnibus: haud igitur quidquam procedere posset,
Principium quoniam cedendi nulla daret res.

Lib. i. ver. 331.

(*c*) Denique cur alias aliis præstare videmus
Pondere res rebus, nihilo majore figurâ?

Ibid. ver. 359.

It is true, he says, gravity is of the nature of matter; but the argument is equally good, though it be the effect only of something immaterial, provided it acts through the whole solidity of bodies; for which see Mr. Herman, Lemma before his *Phoronomia*.

cities,

cities, could they differ in force, or moment (*d*). Besides, matter is not one Being, but one species of Beings. Being is as justly predicable concerning one atom, or particle of matter, as concerning the whole mass; so that the unity of the necessarily existing Being, is, in no wise, competent to it. And lastly, there is no contradiction in saying that once matter existed not: or the supposing the non-existence of matter is not the supposing of an impossibility, as it would be, if matter were a necessarily-existing Being, by No. 5.

9. From what is said, No. 1. and 8, concerning the immensity of space, it follows, that the necessarily-existing Being is immense, as to his essence or substance. For wherever we suppose space to be, where the substance or essence of this Being is not, there we suppose a property existing without a subject; an affection of Being without Being itself. Which is an express contradiction. This shows him to be immense, or unlimited, not only in opposition to being circumscribed by any thing exterior, but also to being excluded from any thing interior. For universally wherever he exists not essentially and substantially, there still a property exists without a subject. Proper limitation, and in a phi-

(*d*). Dr. Keil's *Introductio ad veram physicam*, Lect. 10. Hinc autem colligitur, quod quo major corporibus insit materiae quantitas, &c.

losophical sense, is effected as much by exclusion from any thing, as by circumscription. If our globe of the earth were all covered with ocean, save one small island, the water would be as truly limited, though not so much limited, by that spot, as it would be, if that spot only were water, and all the rest dry land. The immensity of this Being follows also from the consideration, that it is impossible that he could be limited. For he would not limit himself: this thought supposes him originally unlimited, and is contradictory besides. For as to all his essence, he is equally necessarily existing, and raised above possibility or casuality. There was no other Being to limit him; he being the only necessary Being. And nothing, which can have no effects, could not limit him. Therefore he is unlimited, or infinite as well as eternal. He exists necessarily every where, as well as at all times. The necessity is equal: or rather it is one and the same necessity that extends both to eternity and immensity. From this we may correct an inconsistent prejudice which we generally entertain: for we are apt to allow, in our own imagination, a large field of possibility, to non-entity or negation of Being. Whereas when we consider the essence of the First Being, that it stretcheth out infinitely, and occupies immensity, we find it leaves no

room for non-existence, but quite excludes it.

10. If we consider the eternity, unity, and immensity of this Being, it will be easy to infer concerning his perfections: for these attributes themselves are surely the greatest perfections. Therefore we shall find ourselves forced to conclude concerning him, that he hath all perfection; because he is the first Being, the only Being not caused, and the cause of all other Being: so that all perfections that are, were in him originally, and belong to him necessarily; as necessarily as existence itself. For otherwise, all perfections that are, could never have been, which is again an express contradiction: since if they were not in him, they were no where, that is, were not at all. And therefore, farther we must conclude, that he hath all possible perfection; or that greater perfection than is in him, is impossible, contradictory, no perfection; for it is the perfection of no Being, and possible to no Being: that is, impossible. If therefore, we are certain that any property or attribute is a perfection, we are equally certain that it is, and must be, a perfection and attribute of this Being. This we are forced to conclude from the nature of this Being considered absolutely, and in himself, as he is one, eternal, and immense.

11. But when we consider the nature of caused Being, or of the things which this

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Being

Being hath effected (for from these generally we get our notions of the several perfections) and that is the nature of all Beings besides; whatever perfection we find in these, we are particularly forced to ascribe such perfection to this Being, which is the cause of them; for this plain reason, that there can be no perfection in the effect which is not in the cause. And yet farther, though we find these perfections but in a very limited degree, and in but an imperfect manner, in the nature of any thing that is caused; we are, notwithstanding, forced to ascribe such perfection to this Being, in an unlimited degree, and in the most perfect manner possible: because, as was shown just now, greater perfection of any kind than is in this Being is contradictory and impossible. And it is equally impossible and contradictory that a higher kind of perfection, or a greater degree of the same kind, can exist any where than exists in him; since he is the first, is the one, is the universal cause of all other Beings: and as much the cause of the perfection that is in their nature, both as to kind and degree, as of their natures themselves. For the perfection that is in their nature, is but their nature itself considered in a certain respect.

12. This considered, if we find any perfection in the rational part of the works of this Being, as power, knowledge, wisdom, justice,

justice, goodness; among mankind, we are justified to run up for the original of these to this Being: to seek and find them there, and to find them there in the most perfect and unlimited degree. Since, as to his nature and substance, he is immense or unlimited, he must be unlimited also as to his power and knowledge; or wherever he is, there his power and knowledge must be. Otherwise he would not know himself, or be powerful where he is present; which would be great imperfections, and therefore imply contradiction to be true of this Being. The same argument that proves the impossibility of the limitation of his essence, will prove also the impossibility of the limitation of these perfections in him. Therefore his being, power, and knowledge, are every where unlimited. That is, he fills immensity not only with his substance, but by his power present, and his knowledge intimate. This is, indeed, a dreadful thought! How justly is he called the searcher of hearts.

13. His wisdom, goodness, justice, are as extensive as his power or knowledge. For if we suppose his power or knowledge to be more extensive, then, as to the excess of these, to speak after our manner, it would follow, that he were not powerful with justice, or knowing with wisdom: neither of which absurdities can be affirmed of a Being which hath all possible perfections. Our notion of

the wisdom of this Being is only his knowledge conceived jointly with his goodness. Though his knowledge is infinite, yet he chuses from among possible means that only which is properest and best; and therefore is said to design according to infinite wisdom. This is conspicuous chiefly in his works of nature: for though all possible effects are equally easy to infinitude of power, yet he acts always by the shortest way.

14. His wisdom, justice and goodness, we may conceive as springing from his power and knowledge in a very natural manner. For, as before, he is infinitely powerful, being able to perform all things not implying a negation of power and perfection, and unlimited in knowledge, knowing himself and all that he can perform; and as these perfections are necessary to him, as necessary as his existence, he must therefore have infinite pleasure resulting from the contemplation of them: or he must be infinitely **HAPPY**. Now from these, which are called his physical perfections, his moral perfections of wisdom, justice, and goodness flow: or the conception of the first kind necessarily includes the conception of the last. For having infinity of power and knowledge, and therefore of happiness and pleasure, he must be infinitely free from all passions and affections that spring from the want of these: or he must be infinitely free from ignorance, falshood, deceit, partiality, malice, cruelty:

since these, or any of them, suppose want of power, want of knowledge, or want of some pleasure or other, real or imaginary, which the cruel or malicious Being sees elsewhere, than in itself. And on a little reflection we shall find, that all such affections are the consequences, and sure marks, of fear, poverty, ignorance, or defect of some kind or other. Which are affections therefore infinitely removed from a nature possessed of infinite and unlimited happiness; or such a nature must be possessed of their contraries in the most perfect degree. Besides, his creatures have nothing but what they have received from him; and being infinitely wise, he could not have designed to have given them any perfections that could have raised his jealousy and envy: nor could he have had any other motive inducing him to create them at all, or give them any thing, than to make them happy according to their several natures (f).

15. Upon

(f) This lets us see how unphilosophical it was in *Lucretius* to suppose that nothing could have induced a creative power to have brought any Being into existence, but the view of being bettered by that created Being; or the sense of some uneasiness before that Being was created. The whole place is here quoted; for he reasons no other way about an eternal Being than one might about finite man.

Dicere porro, hominum causâ voluisse parare
Præclaram mundi naturam, proptereaque
Id laudabile opus Divûm laudare decere——
Desipere'ft. Quid enim immortalibus atque beatis

15. Upon these rational and solid grounds the providence of God is established. Since he is infinitely just and good, infinitely knowing and wise, and infinitely powerful; it follows by the strongest necessity that he must inspect and constantly superintend all his own works; and so order, govern, and over-rule all second causes, that what is wisest, justest, best, shall finally obtain. Or it follows, that there is, and necessarily must be, a particular, constant, exact providence, and government among all created Beings: especially such as that the actions of free agents, that are out of the rule of eternal rectitude and justice, shall be again reduced to it. For being confessed infinitely good and just, he must design such an order and government; otherwise we must again deny him to be infinitely good and just: being infinitely wise and knowing, he must know how to order and contrive it, and how all things are to be disposed, so that it may obtain; otherwise we must again refuse him

Gratia nostra queat largiri emolumentum,
 Ut nostrâ quicquam causâ gerere adgrediantur?
 Quidve novi potuit tanto post antè quietos
 Inlicere, ut cuperent vitam mutare priorem?
 Nam gaudere novis rebus debere videtur,
 Cui veteres obsunt; sed, cui nihil accidit ægri
 Tempore in anteacto, cum pulchre degeret ævum,
 Quid potuit novitatis amorem accendere tali?
 An, credo, in tenebris vita, ac mœrore jacebat,
 Donec diluxit rerum genitalis origo?

Lib. v. ver. 157.

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the perfections of infinite wisdom and knowledge; and being infinitely powerful, he must be able to execute what his goodness necessitates him to design, and his wisdom enables him to contrive; otherwise we must again retract his being infinitely powerful. The multiplicity of things cannot perplex, nor their minuteness escape a nature necessarily all intelligent; nor can their distance and variety distract immensity of presence and power. These are lame and narrow conceptions drawn from finite Beings, and proper to them only. But this Being, by the wonderful and excellent necessity of his perfections, cannot but see and comprehend all things at once. Therefore, as of his own good pleasure at first, he created all things else that are, so because of this fullness and excellent necessity of his perfections, he constantly exercises over them a most just superintendence and rational government, extending to the minutest things, with a preciseness infinitely greater than we can conceive.

16. From this account of the providence of the Creator over all his works, it follows, that a rational or free Being (for these two are but one and the same thing, as will appear;) such as man, should make the will of this Being his rule of action. This necessarily follows, unless it were possible that man should oppose the will of his Creator, and yet act rationally or profitably for him-

self. As free he may act *thus*, or otherwise; and, although the purposes of infinite wisdom cannot fail to obtain, yet the accomplishing of these will have a very different effect on him, according as he acts rationally, or otherwise. But of this, enough at present.

17. It will be pleasant and satisfying when, after this reasoning (which I shall take the liberty to call a demonstration,) *a priori*, from the nature of God himself, of the necessity of his providence over all his works; it shall appear, experimentally, that it obtains in fact, as far as human researches can go; and that the consideration of the universe itself, and the things in it, exactly answers this account. It is necessary, however, to observe here, that the not attending to the immensity of the Deity, but measuring his power and knowledge by our scanty conceptions of things, conversant only about very finite Beings, hath been one chief reason of atheism in the world; and the only reason of polytheism, or multiplying gods according to our wants and necessities, and often according to our fancies. *Lucretius* cries out, and as it were in indignation, calls on the gods themselves, to witness the monstrous impossibility, that one Being should be present in all places at all times,

Omnibus inque locis esse omni tempore praesto,
and consequently manage all things in heaven and in earth, and effect all that we see
done

done in nature. Though he had not enough considered the nature of an eternal Being, *Lucian*, according to the indiscreet liberty he takes with all things sacred and profane, endeavours to turn this notion into ridicule, representing his deities as harassed and grumbling at the unreasonableness of mortals in molesting them always and at all times with their greatest trifles [*Καὶ σχεδὸν ἀνέφικτα ὑπὸ λεπτότητος*]. For this reason it was that the ancient Heathens invented a god to serve every occasion, and attend every place. And modern accounts tell us that the idolatrous nations in the new world lay under the same prejudice. *Garcilasso de la Vega*, speaking of the gods of the ancient Incas of *Peru*, says, (Book i. ch. iv.) To begin with their gods, we must know, that they are agreeable to the quality of their own corrupt, and abominable manners: and every nation, province, tribe, and house, had its own particular god. For their opinion was, that one god would have business sufficient to take care of one province, or family, and that their power was so confined, that it could have no virtue or extent within the jurisdiction of another. And *Antonio de Solis* relates the same prejudice of the inhabitants of *Mexico*, Book iii. ch. 3. Speaking of the Spaniards endeavours to convert some of them, he says, *Magiscatzin*, and the rest who attended him, at that time gave but very small hopes of their being reduced;

ced; saying, that the God whom the Spaniards adored, was very great, and must be greater than theirs; but that each of them was powerful in his own dominion. For that in one place there was occasion for one God against lightning and tempests; in another, for water and harvests; and again, another for war; and so on for all human necessities: For that it was impossible for any one to take care of the whole. This is noticed that we may know how material it is, and how much it concerns us, to consider maturely, and be satisfied about the immensity of the Deity. It seems this hath been the stumbling-block of human reason in all ages. The eternity of some Being forces itself upon us; but the immensity of Being requires attention: and we have accustomed ourselves to think that immensity is something which is not applicable to any thing, or an attribute purely of nothing. Our common notion is, that without and beyond all Being, there may be, and is, an immense void, as free from all Being as it is from material Being. But immensity free from all Being, can be no other than immense nothing, which is a manifest repugnancy in terms. For any part of that immense is always something, viz. room, space, extension, or expansion, real quantity, as Dr. *Clarke* hath shown clearly in his letters to Mr. *Leibnitz*; and sure none will say this is a pure negation, as it must necessarily

farily be, if it be nothing. It is only negative of material substance when considered right; and having abstracted matter from it, it is after that boundlessly something positive; which we may be sure of, since it would afford space, room, or capacity for body. Absolute nothing, that is, a negation of all things, could never do this. Immense capacity is not nothing: and immense nothing is a self-destructive conception. In reason it may as well be said, that there was eternity without any Being to be eternal, as that immensity is necessary without any Being to be immense. In fine, eternity and immensity are real necessary affections of Being, and therefore the affections of a real necessary Being. God hath discovered these his wonderful perfections even to our natural reason, if philosophers would not affect to be learned in opposition to reason and demonstration.

18. Before we leave this subject it is fit to observe an instance or two where men reason very falsely; for though attending to the former conclusions would make it easy to avoid them, yet they will be more obvious if they are particularly mentioned. From the nature of infinite perfection it follows, that if there were any one thing or effect which is possible to real power, that is, not implying a contradiction to be performed, which could not be performed by this Being, this single instance would be a limit to his

his power, or give strength and conclusiveness to the argument that denied it to be unlimited, according to the reason assigned No. 9; since an effect performable by real power could not be performed by it. And this again would bring the whole argument about the infinity of his perfections in question, render precarious and weaken the force of the whole conclusion. As also if there was any the least thing, to which the knowledge of this Being did not reach, providing it were the object of true knowledge, and did not imply a contradiction to be known and understood; this one particular, not comprehended by him, would be a negation of knowledge in him, and consequently hem in, and limit, the infinity of that attribute, enough to justify the denial of unlimited knowledge to be in him; and not only render suspected, but actually invalidate the conclusiveness of the whole reason for the infinity of his perfections. Just as in the case of those, who contend for the necessity of an universal plenum, or the impossibility of a vacuum, if it can be shown, that the least space supposable is absolutely free from all matter; it not only establishes the possibility of the thing denied, but the reality of it, and ruins the whole hypothesis, as much and as effectually, as if it could be proved that the largest tracts of space were unfilled with matter. And after the same manner, if we suppose this Being not
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to be just and good in any the least assignable instance, or (which is the same thing) having it in his power, not to bring back to the supreme rule of justice and rectitude, the actions of free Beings that are out of it, or not to redress any the least enormity of fraud, injustice, oppression, which we see among mankind; then will those perfections in him suffer an exception and limitation, which will justly affect the whole conclusion for the infinity of his perfections. So rigorous and precise is this demonstration! Now, though none of these suppositions can be made without a contradiction; as, for instance, this Being knowing himself, and all things that he hath made, it is repugnant that he should be ignorant of any thing; yet the use of this reasoning is, to let us know what and how much is concluded, when once the infinity of his perfections is firmly established; and to make us aware of the just import of that expression, that we do not frame arguments inconsistently with it, or think it is possible that there may be an inaccuracy in truth, and in the actions of God, as in the actions of men.

19. Moreover, men are much overseen in reason and philosophy, when they allow a different force and conclusiveness to what is physically impossible, or that which, if it were denied, would contradict the physical perfections of God; and to what is morally impossible,

impossible, or the denying of which would contradict his moral perfections. For from the view and deduction of his perfections of both kinds given above, we shall be obliged to own, that his moral perfections are as necessary and essential to him, as his physical perfections are. His physical perfections flow necessarily and immutably from his self-existence, No. 10, and his moral perfections flow as necessarily and immutably from these, No. 14, therefore they must be as essential to his nature, and as immutable in it, as the other. Just as in a geometrical figure, those properties that flow from the primary and leading property in it, as really belong to it, and are as inseparable from its nature, as that primary property itself; and they are as pure truth, and stand all trials as much as it doth. Or, the moral perfections of God are but the necessary result of his physical perfections, when he is considered as acting towards his creatures. Therefore if it can be shown that an action is morally impossible to the Creator, to be by him performed, or that the doing of it would show a Being not to be good and just, it follows demonstratively, that it is as impossible to him, as if it were physically impossible; or as if the doing of it implied a contradiction. For it really implies a contradiction with respect to those perfections, which are as necessary and essential to him, as his infinite power or knowledge is. Thus

to punish the innocent, or not punish the guilty, or to suffer either of these, if done by men, finally to pass without redress, is as impossible to God, as to effect that the three angles of a triangle should be equal to more or fewer, than two right angles. And this is no affected, enthusiastic rant of any religious party; but a truth we are forced upon, by fair and sober reasoning.

20. Having thus endeavoured to establish the perfections of this adorable Being, it is necessary next to observe, that if we would be experimentally and familiarly convinced of his knowledge, wisdom, power, and goodness, we ought to look into the works of nature, that is, his works, who is the author of nature, the *natura naturans*, as the philosophers speak. For though fair and evident reason is very unexceptionable, and should be satisfying to rational men; yet what we behold with our eyes, affects us more strongly for the most part. The wonders manifested there are ocular demonstrations to cure us of infidelity. In examining these works of his, the more skill we can employ, the more shall we find the effects of these attributes conspicuous in them. Every thing is in the nicest order, and according to the exactest rules. The contrivance in some things is accessible; but oftenest it lies too deep for us: yet even there we may be satisfied how exquisitely wise, and well understood it is. The design is still answered:

answered : a preposterous method in contriving, or want of power in the execution, never disappoints the end. Here it is altogether remarkable, and those who make objections should advert to it, for their own credit, that the more we improve our faculties, and the rational nature, by the acquisition of true knowledge, the better fitted we shall be to see the beauty, and the more pleasure we shall have in contemplating these works of his. It is true there is enough manifested on the outside of the creation, to convince any that are but barely rational, and make them admire ; yet is their satisfaction and pleasure in beholding, far below that which the knowing and learned have, who can enter a little into the nature, ends, propriety, and suitableness of the things seen ; who have studied the rules whereby these beauties are discovered. They thus see what depth of contrivance there must be ; the multiplicity of the things to be adjusted ; the difficulty to produce the effect, and therefore the beauty of it produced ; which the other cannot be aware of, through want of capacity. They gaze superficially, as a clown doth on some fine machine, and go away with a confused notion, without entering into the nature, or knowing the value of the thing beheld. No man ever went so far in examining the works of nature with knowledge, as to be able to discover an error in them, or correct any thing
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by his own skill; or so far that he could not have gone still farther in discovering new beauties, if his own incapacity had not disabled him. It is ill affecting the reputation of knowledge by finding fault here (g). It is an old (h), and still frequent objection, that so much of the earth should be uninhabitable, that so many oceans and desert mountains, and vast rocks, should be placed on the face of the globe, one cannot tell for what use. But we do not advert that the nature of the thing makes it impossible to prevent such a clamour. Though it were all habitable, one might still say that it is not so large as it might have been, complain for more habitable earth, and that it is not ten, or a hundred times as large as it now is. The use of habitable earth, according to our notion, is for living creatures. If it had been less, or less habitable, if all the living creatures on it are provided with habitable earth, there is no ground of quarrelling. In effect, this objection comes to this. Why were there not more animals created, and more room provided for them?

(g) Accusandi sanè, meâ sententiâ, hic sunt sophistæ,
qui cum nondum invenire, neque exponere opera naturæ
queant, eam tamen inertîâ atque inscitîâ condemnant.

Galen. de usu partium.

(h) Principio, quantum cœli tegit impetus ingens,
Indè avidam partem monteis, sylvæque fetarum
Possedere, tenent rupes vastæque paludes,
Et mare, quod latè terrarum distinet oras.

Lucr. L. v. ver. 281.

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And that again to this; Why is not this matter according to my particular fancy? Another man might have said, there are creatures enough, and habitable earth enough for them: And another, the animals are too many, and the earth too lax for them. Who can shew the just proportion in this case? We all suppose it broken, when we make these objections, and yet we know nothing of it. This shews the little strength, or rather the humour of finding fault, in such objections. But it is said, What profusion of elements, what waste of matter to no purpose? This sure is not far from saying, Should not an omnipotent Being have been wary not to exhaust his stores, or his strength? not to have taken up too much of the infinite expanse? or laid out too much of solid extended substance? It is, I think, the characteristic of the works of nature, that there is a profuseness of materials; but a frugality and compend in the method and rules of working: though still with sufficiency. The first shews power, the second wisdom, above all other methods possible. But moreover: Learned and wise men have shewn very necessary purposes, and great ends to be answered, by those oceans, mountains, seas, deserts, which we contend should not encumber the face of the globe. There is not a pretended deformity that hath not its use. This is more than could be promised from the productions

of chance. They have vindicated the works of nature from all attempts, save those of folly and ignorance, which are not to be guarded against. This is an instance, by the way, of our precipitancy and inattention in finding fault with nature.

21. To return, Is not this the mark of a masterly and perfect hand, where the work only requires a diligent and skilful judge to survey it, invites, challenges the nicest enquiry? The most curious searchers, the greatest mathematicians, by all their art and industry, were never able to investigate the structure and contrivance of any the most imperfect animal or vegetable in the creation, with exact precision. Their art hath rather been employed to find methods to apply to the subtilty of nature's work, and yet still she works with ease and freedom, with variety and compass, in less bounds than they can come at. But to be in some manner, and according to our capacity, convinced of the incomprehensible power and knowledge of the Creator of things, imagine the stupendous force it would require to lift up some vast rock, or mountainous promontory into the air, and then to cast it into some far distant part of the ocean! With what astonishment would men behold such a sight! And yet it is certain, the whole earth, with all the weighty rocks and mountains upon it, is driven constantly through the æther with incredible

swiftness ; and yet with such well-measured force, that it still returns back on its own track again. Besides, it is at the same time still whirled round on its own axis. And in the regularity of these impetuous motions consists the comfort and pleasure of us dwelling on its surface. And not only the earth, but bodies much more large and unwieldly than it, are thus constantly driven round (i). This may help us to see what vast force is impressed on the bodies of the universe : but infinite power is above comparison or proportion. It acts upon the whole mass of matter, overcomes its sluggishness, impresses upon it what force, gives it what velocity and direction seems good. The variety of directions, the opposition of forces, the greatness, the minuteness of the parts moved, might seem to us to require an infinite number of Beings. But God is every where present, powerful, and knowing.

22. Again, let us consider the circulation of the blood in the minuteſt animalcules discernible by the help of the solar microscope. In them are discovered innumerable streams of liquor that flow without ceasing, while the animal hath life, in various and complicated meanders, and in directions against the universal law of

(i) The diameter of Jupiter is 81,155 British miles, that of the earth 7964.

gravity: and from thence let us consider how inconceivably fine and nice the currents must be, in creatures that are themselves so minute, as with difficulty they can become the objects of sense, any how assisted (*k*). For all vegetation and nutrition must be performed by a circulation and distribution of the aliment through all parts; otherwise there should be nothing but an agglutination to the outside of things. Let us imagine that it were proposed as a problem, to the united art and industry of all the men in the world, to produce the most imperfect and most contemptible of these animals; or even to explicate the method and rules, by which any part of them is produced; and let us think what the event would be! This would be a fit circumstance for objectors to grow bold upon, to justify their proceeding, and shew that they understood the art of creating, and forming in weight, number and proportion. The power and wisdom of God are not only employed in the great and stupendous parts of the universe, but more astonishingly employed, if one may so say, in the least and most despicable parts of it; things which arrogant, purblind man thinks too little to deserve his notice. The smallest appur-

(*k*) See Dr. Keil's *Introduct. ad ver. Phys. Lect. v. de materiæ subtilitate*. "Libet crassiores sanguinis partes in his animalculis contemplari—ipsorumque magnitudinem calculo eruere," &c.

tenance of the smallest, and to us vilest animal, could not only not escape his knowledge, but could not be what it is, unless it were by the demonstrative exertion of these so much controverted perfections, in the immediate production and constant preservation of them! His wisdom and power are always working in the wild desert, in the deep ocean, within and about ourselves. And yet we insolently criticise the want of these perfections in the universe!

23. Such considerations as these will help, in some measure, to let us see that the power, knowledge, and goodness of the Creator, extends to things infinitely great on the one hand, and to things infinitely little on the other. But farther to convince us, in this practical manner, of his knowledge and wisdom, let us call to mind that the most admired, and really most perfect productions of human art, are but faint imitations of some or other of nature's works; and constructed, though very coarsely and imperfectly, on the same principles, unto which alone their success is owing (*1*). As indeed what other principles could they have been constructed upon? Man could not, for

(1) *Nemo sanæ mentis dicet, naturæ opera non esse simplicissima, et, quàm maximè fieri potest, compendiosa. Ergo machinæ quæ ab humano artificio excogitantur, si necessarias naturæ operationes æmulantur, et eis simillimæ fiant, procul dubio finem optatum sortientur.*

Borell, de mot. animal, Part i. Prop. 223.

instance,

instance, make new laws of optics to himself, and form his inventions according to these: he was forced to observe and follow those set to him, instituted originally at the creation. Nor could he have contrived new properties of mechanic motion, to serve his own ends, and fit machines of his fashion to these new properties. The natures of these were established beforehand, and he had a rich fund to borrow from, if he could but copy after it. Now what more admired instance have we of human art, than the invention of telescopes and microscopes, of artificial vision, if it may be so called? And yet there is but a small part here effected by man's knowledge and invention, in respect of what he is necessitated to suppose already effected, and still regularly obtaining. He is forced to proceed upon the supposition of the properties of light still constant and regular; of refracting bodies and the regular effects of their different figures: but chiefly he supposes the whole invention performed already in the eye, and to vastly more advantage, without which all his endeavours would have been so many contradictory attempts, and strictly impossible. In short, all that can be attributed to human invention amounts only to the lucky art of falling upon a method to copy nature. Yet it is not meant as if this was nothing, or little, or not very much: there hath not been, perhaps, every thing considered, a man

whose industry deserves more to be remembered with gratitude, than the inventor of the first optical instrument; if yet it was the invention of one, and not produced from the concurring hints of many (*m*). But when the invention of the method of imitating is so valuable, what must the first contrivance be, where there was no pattern? When we allow that there goes so much knowledge, art, and industry to this, we are very absurd when we will allow none to the performing the thing originally, and with incomparably more success. For though optical instruments have received great improvements, yet how vastly short come they of the eyes of animals, where there is a difference of contrivance adapted to the necessity of every species! Some birds see objects below them, and round them, to a great distance, without the help or necessity of long tubes. Some insects see vastly minute objects, their business being with such, and yet are not confined to the short focal distances, or the narrow spaces of the microscope. A lens of nature's forming, if the eye may be called so, is capable of different configurations, that though the place of the object alters backwards or forwards, the place of the image may be still on the retina (*n*); in which particular it is impossible

(*m*) See Mr. *Molynaux's* *Dioptrica nova*, Part ii. c. 6.

(*n*) It is therefore contrived by the most wise and omnipotent framer of the eye, that it should have a power of

impossible an artificial lens can imitate it. The same might be said of the different appertures of the pupil, according to the different degrees of light; in which the artificial lens is vastly outdone by the natural. But, what is remarkable in this matter, an animal gives the eye all this variety of configuration, and that properly, without knowing why it doth so, how it doth it, or generally so much as that it is done (*o*): which manner of acting is manifested in the eye properly beyond all other parts of the body. In some creatures the eye is furnished with a native light of its own, that even in the dark their necessities may be answered, their chief business being then (*p*). Where is the

of adapting itself, in some measure, to nigh and distant objects. For they require different conformations of the eye. Because the rays proceeding from the luminous points of nigh objects do more diverge than those from objects more remote. *Idem*, Part i. Prop. 28. And how this is effected, see Dr. Keil's Anatomy, ch. iv. § 4.

(*o*) *Borelli*, indeed, Prop. xxv. Part 2. de mot. animal. says, "Peritiam habitualement, quâ spiritus animales determinatos nervos in cerebro agitant, non naturâ, sed exercitio atque experientia acquiri, credibile est". And his reasons for this assertion put it past doubt, that it is so in many cases. Yet, I humbly conceive, if we consider that infants cry, move their limbs and eyes as soon as born, and that the young of other animals, which come into the world stronger, immediately perform more various motions, we shall find reason to say, the soul in many cases acts extempore, prompted by instinct, without the necessity of such trials. And this manner of acting seems chiefly competent to the eyes.

(*p*) There is, besides this large opening of the pupil, in some nocturnal animals, another admirable provision, enabling

the possibility of nature's contrivances here being imitated by the attempts of human skill? The consideration of one machine for moving the eye (the musculus trochlearis) made *Sturmius* cry out in a rapture, (as Mr. *Derham* quotes) that God wrought always, not only by the principles of geometry, but also by the principles of mechanics (q).

24. And indeed (to touch briefly upon another branch of invention, for which human art triumphs highly) those principles are properly ascribable to God alone, and rest on the same basis on which the natures of all things are built. The most complicated and artful machines that ever were, or are possible to be invented, must necessarily suppose them. That proportion which is to be observed between the way of the power and that of the weight, and the weight and power themselves, that there may be an equilibrium between them, which is fundamental in this affair, must necessarily be sup-

enabling them to catch their prey in the dark; and that is, a radiation of the eyes. Of which see Dr. *Wallis*. *Derham*, *Physico-Theolog.* B. iv. ch. 2. Note 26.

(q) And here I might instance the peculiar and artificial structure of the trochlearis, and the augmentation of its power by the trochlea. *Ibid.* And in his note (17) upon this place are these words of *Sturmius*: "Musculum trochlearem, per intermediam trochleam traductam, nunquam intueor, quin admirabundus mecum, ὁ Θεός, exclamem, ὃ μόνον αἰ γεωμετρῇ, ἀλλὰ καὶ αἰ μηχανάται."

posed

posed pre-established; and must be refunded solely into the eternal knowledge of the Creator. Good men will be surprized to find such things as these mentioned, as if it were possible to call them in question: And yet it is necessary to remind ourselves whence we borrow; what we are proud of; and of the difference between the Author of nature, and ourselves, in power and knowledge. Now with what inequality of success have these pre-established and common principles been put in practice by human endeavours, and in the works of nature? Nature produces as many instances of a perpetual motion, as it produces animal bodies, or, I might even add, vegetables; in the circulation, to wit; and hath almost as many ways of effecting this as there are different species of animals. But all the art of man could never effect a distant imitation of this: and their attempts towards it must always be abortive. For since, in any machine, the whole force or quantity of motion can never return undiminished on the first part moved (*r*), it is
a neces-

(*r*) Apparet motum et nasci posse et perire. Verum, per tenacitatem corporum fluidorum, partiumque suarum attritum, visque elasticæ in corporibus solidis imbecillitatem; multò magis in eam semper partem vergit natura rerum, ut pereat motus, quàm ut nascatur. — Quoniam igitur varii illi motus, qui in mundo conspiciuntur, perpetuo decrescunt universi, necesse est prorsus, quo ij conservari et recrefere possint, ut ad actiosa aliqua principia recurramus. Newtoni Optice, Quæst. ult. page 341, 343,

a necessary condition that the motion should be constantly re-produced as it is destroyed; an effect utterly impossible to us. And indeed it were a shame to make a comparison between the effects of human art and those of nature, if we were not so foolish as to celebrate the wonders wrought by men, and yet ascribe the works of the Creator to blind chance. *Galen* says rightly, that he knows not if they be men in their right wits that judge thus falsely (*s*). It is altogether remarkable, that men must not only, in all their engines, observe and follow the pre-established mechanic rules set to them by the Author of nature; otherwise all their endeavours would be so many contradictory attempts; but farther, since a power is necessary, and the main thing in all such motion, which, by its equal agency, may reproduce the motion constantly, as it is impaired, and so keep the whole still going; it is altogether remarkable, I say, that they are forced to suppose this prepared and sup-

§43, as cited by *Dr. Clarke*, 3d Reply to *Leibnitz*. Besides, though there were no soft, nor fluid bodies, but all perfectly elastic, even in these the motion is destroyed by a direct shock, though instantly reproduced: and it is reproduced as much by an immaterial cause, as in any case whatsoever, as will be shown. And this at length must be meant by the *actus a principia*.

(*s*) *Haud scio an sit hominum sobriorum ad fortunam opificem id revocare: alioqui quid tandem erit, quod cum providentia atque arte efficitur? Omnino enim hoc ei contrarium esse debet quod casu atque fortuito fit*—as cited by *Mr. Derham*.

plied

plied to their hand also, or their designs would miscarry a second time; and after all, that they should judge so unequally! Would it not be a foolish thing in an artist to boast that he could contrive a machine which should go always, by the help, or force of a man's hand keeping it in motion? At the bottom, all machines of human invention come just to this. For if the agency of the power, which supplies the place of the man's hand, is suspended for the least time, all the motion ceases. All that men should have to do then, the power being thus supplied to them, would be to keep it in circumstances of acting endlessly, in order to effect a perpetual motion, for in reality this is a perpetual mover afforded them: but even this they will never be able to effect; and he only can, whose immediate influence this power is, and who applies it at his pleasure.

25. Hence it is, (because those principles derive their origin from the author of nature, and because the works of nature are effected according to them,) that those, who have attempted the solution of animal motion by mechanic principles, have succeeded best, and always will do so (†). But here that we have mentioned this; is

(†) *Borelli* is an excellent instance of this; see *Wolffius* *Mechan. element. Probl. 30. Schol. 2. & Definit. 60. Schol.* as *Lucretius* is of the contrary.

it not a mortifying consideration to the Epicurean, that the works of nature should be explicable on any certain, fixed, and immutable principles! And yet this is a truth that nothing but extreme ignorance will make any man deny. It were worth the while next to enquire, how these principles come to be so regular, so immutable; and what the Atheist will say to this appearance. Fate, *εἰμαρμένη, μοῖρα, parca*, are mere words, which stand for nothing in philosophy; poetical Beings only. Or if fate is a positive Being, it must be the parent of liberty, by the *exiguum clinamen* it hath given to Epicurus's Atoms (*u*), or chance must be the parent of order! This is to make words stand for their contraries.

26. Let us now turn back a little to the consideration of the knowledge of this Being, who is the first cause, and observe that it is the knowledge of himself, of his nature and perfections, and chiefly of his power. If he had perfections, but knew them not, that was an imperfection, and he was defective in knowledge; or if he knew any thing performable by real power, but

- (*u*) Libera per terras unde hæc animantibus extat,
Unde est hæc, inquam, fatis avolsa voluntas
Per quam progredimur, quò ducit quemque voluptas?
Declinamus item motus, nec tempore certo
Nec regione loci certâ, sed ubi ipsa tulit mens.

Lucr. L. ii. ver. 256.

Id facit exiguum clinamen principiorum,
Nec regione loci certâ, nec tempore certo. v. 292.
could

could not perform it, he was defective in power: either of which is manifestly repugnant, by what is said above. All his perfections are equally extensive and boundless. Therefore whatever he could perform, he knew; and what he knew as not performable by him, was impossible to be performed by real power; and implied either a contradiction to be performed at all, or a defect of perfection in the agent, if it could. Hence arises a necessary distinction in the knowledge of the first Being, viz. of such things as could be performed by real power, and of such things as implied a contradiction to be performed. To make this plainer by an example: there were in the knowledge of this Being (to express it after our manner) the ideas of heat, and of light; and farther, that of their consistency; or that they implied no contradiction to be joined together in the same subject, or made to co-exist without the divine intellect, in the same created nature. By existing without the divine intellect is not meant precisely without his Being or essence; that is immense: but receiving a subsistence by themselves, and other than they had in the divine ideas from all eternity. Again, there were in the intellect of the same necessary Being the ideas of the affections or properties, square and circular, and farther that of their disagreement, or inconsistency, resulting from these two; or that it was not an effect

effect performable by infinite power, to make them consist together in the same subject, or individual created nature, without the intellect; so that it should be at once both square and circular; since the existence of one of these, supposed and depended upon the non-existence of the other. Nothing of all this can, I suppose, be refused without incurring manifest absurdities. Even among men, the having ideas, or perceptions, implies the being percipient of their agreement or disagreement, consistency or inconsistency. And if it be so with respect to us and our ideas, it cannot be otherwise, or in a more imperfect manner, with respect to the ideas in the divine mind.

27. The first member of this distinction is the knowledge of possibilities; and the second of impossibilities; both which are to be concluded to be in the divine intellect; for we see, they are in some measure, in our finite and fallible intellect, who are but the effects of this cause.

28. Hence all possibilities are consistent among themselves, and with each other. For those things are said to be consistent, that may exist all at once, or co-exist in time, though not united in one subject: but possibilities, by the conception of them, are effects that may be made all exist at once, by infinite power; since the existence of any one of them doth not depend upon,

or imply the non-existence of any other. But no possibility is consistent with any impossibility whatsoever. If an impossibility were consistent in itself, the force of all evidence would vanish, and we could not infer that any thing at all were consistent. Besides, it can never be, that an effect not performable by real power, that is no effect, could ever receive any confirmation from, or have any agreement with an effect performed or performable by that power. These things we must conceive to have been so in the divine mind from all eternity, and before the commencing of any created Being.

29. Now when this first Being was to bring into existence, or create other beings, he was necessitated, so to speak, to take from the fund and source of his own knowledge, so many of his own consistent ideas, that is, so many possibilities, or such combinations of those consistent ideas, as infinite wisdom determined should co-exist in the same subject, and to join them together, according to this determined combination, in the natures or constitutions of these created Beings. Thus the ideas of solidity and extension (or of a substance that should have both these properties) were eternally compatible and consistent with each other in the divine intellect; and therefore exhibitable co-existently without it in the same nature, or Being. And thus, the ideas of activity and perceptivity, (or of a substance

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that

that should be both active and perceptive, or be the subject of both these properties) were eternally consistent in the knowledge of this Being; and therefore possible in time to be exhibited co-existing in one nature, without it. This, I conceive, we are forced to conclude. For the Creator must have taken the original patterns of the natures of things from something in his own knowledge; otherwise he would not have been a Being that wrought with knowledge and design: and these patterns could be nothing but the ideas that were consistent eternally in his knowledge, to be placed together in the same subject, and to constitute the same created nature. He must have taken them from the knowledge of his power; or the knowledge of what were the effects of infinite power; because he must be supposed to produce effects equally by knowledge and power: and they must have been the consistent ideas in his knowledge; because ideas inconsistent were not the objects of infinite power, nor could be made consistent, or joined together in one nature.

30. Thus the natures of things are only the eternal, and eternally consistent ideas in the intellect of the creator of them, exhibited co-existently, or made subsistent together in one subject. Or if we will distinguish the natures of things from the things themselves, or the natures of them from their actual existence, the natures of things

are those ideas, and the things themselves those ideas exhibited. And as those ideas were eternally and necessarily in the divine mind, and consequently the mutual consistencies between them; so the natures of things, or their essences, as they are called in the Schools, are rightly said to be eternal, though their existence, or the things themselves, commenced in time.

31. Moreover, it is to be considered in this matter, that if the ideas in the divine intellect implied an impossibility to be made to exist by themselves without the intellect, as subjects, or substances; but only a possibility to subsist in some subject, as the ideas of the properties of things, even these properties must be said to have a nature, as much as the subjects or substances themselves, whose properties they are: because the ideas of them are as necessary in the divine mind, and as fixed and immutable there, as the ideas of their subjects, being necessarily and eternally connected to the ideas of these subjects. And as the natures of things do not depend upon their actual existence, being previous to that, as was said just now, so neither do they suppose their subsistence by themselves; otherwise there would be no accidents, but all would be substances; and substances without properties are not to be conceived, or possible. In short, from this account it will follow, that whatever hath a necessary and fixed idea in the divine intel-

lect, must be said to have a fixed and necessary nature; since those ideas are the natures of things, independent of their real existence, or separate subsistence. Therefore it will follow, that justice, goodness, wisdom, &c. have a nature, and are realities in the nature of things: and this not only for the reason given before, viz. because they are perfections inseparable from an all-perfect Being, whose existence, and nature too, is necessary; but as they are communicable perfections, and properties possible in created natures or beings, since as such they have fixed and immutable ideas in the divine intellect. Upon which account also, temperance, chastity, fortitude, prudence, and such other perfections as are not to be ascribed formally to the first Being, have a fixed invariable nature; because fixed, eternal ideas in his intellect. It will not be to the purpose to reply, that all men have not the same ideas of these perfections, or properties, and therefore their natures vary according to our notions of them: for their natures depend upon the ideas not of men, but of a higher Being. They are fixed and immutable, previous to our having any ideas of them, whatever kind of ideas we have of them, or whether we ever have any ideas of them at all. Besides the ideas of men do not agree about the natures of things that have a confessed existence without the intellect; which yet doth not render the natures

of these things variable, according to our notions of them. The idea of matter is not the same in all men; nor of immaterial substance; nay not the idea of the Great Being himself, who, notwithstanding, exists necessarily and unchangeably, and independent of our ideas of him. We should endeavour to acquire ideas of the natures of things conformable to those natures themselves; since the natures of things will not conform themselves to whatever kind of ideas we entertain of them.

32. As also, from this all mathematical figures, a circle, ellipsis, sphere, cone, &c. must be said to have a fixed unchangeable nature, whether they exist without the intellect or not: since it cannot be denied that their ideas were eternal, and eternally the same in the intellect of an infinitely knowing Being. They have fixed and unalterable properties belonging to, and flowing from the nature of them, which do not vary, whatever our ideas are. The man who first thought of a circle, did not make the nature of it, or know all the properties belonging to it; but only fell upon it as it was eternally understood in the divine mind, and made up of consistent ideas there. Perhaps mankind, as long as the race continues, will still be finding out new figures, and new properties of those already known, which at this present, are no less real truths, and known in the mind of some be-

ing, though we are ignorant of them, than they will be after men have discovered them. Truths known in Europe were not less truths because the inhabitants of America had not discovered them. It was equally and at all times true of the square of the hypotenuse of a right angled triangle, that it is equal to the squares of both the containing sides, before *Pythagoras* discovered this truth, as afterwards. The same reasoning is to be applied to the natures of numbers.

33. From what is said, it is evident, what is the fountain of human discoveries and inventions; or what it is that men do discover and invent. The common sense of mankind doth not allow that they make or frame originally new properties and truths; but only that they discover or find out. They discover what was eternally consistent, and therefore known in the divine intellect. There are infinite possibilities, or an infinite number of consistent ideas, or of possible effects, that have not been actually produced by infinite power, or that we know of: of these mankind may be endlessly making discoveries. But they can never start a new possibility to infinite power, or prevent infinite knowledge in the invention of a new truth. This doth not depreciate their endeavours; but raises the value of science, by showing its high original.

34. Since the natures of created things are only the consistent ideas of them in the mind

mind of the Creator; these natures being but those ideas, exhibited co-existing *extra intellectum*; just as the engine, automaton, or effect, represents, and is a copy of the idea in the mind of the artificer: it follows, that the relation which one created thing hath to another, is only the relation that was between their ideas in the mind of their Creator. For the whole nature of the effect, or thing made, is contained in the idea of it, as in the divine intellect. Therefore the relations that are between their natures, are eternal, as these natures or ideas are eternal.

35. Or if we should call these relations the correspondencies, aptitudes, or congruities that are between the natures of created things; still these are but the agreements and mutual correspondencies that are between the ideas of these things in the divine mind. For the things thus natured being but the exhibition of these ideas, and not more perfect than they, whatever reality or perfection is in the natures of the things, is in the ideas of them. Indeed it is impossible that the natures of things should be more perfect than the ideas of them in the intellect of their Creator. There is no perfection but what is in him, No. 10. nor any perfection in him which he knows not, No. 26. So any perfection in the natures of things, which was not in his ideas of them, must have been without a cause; impossible. Therefore, for instance, that ap-

titude, congruity, or relation, that is between the eye and light, or in general between the object and the faculty apprehending it, is but the original relation that was between the ideas of such object and the apprehending faculty. Therefore again, the natures of things remaining the same, the relations and mutual respects they bear to one another, are not arbitrary and changeable, but fixed and necessary. For it is repugnant in conception, that the ideas (or natures) being the same, their relations and mutual habitudes to each other should be different. This argument concerning the relation and congruity between the natures of things is the more insisted on here, that if we meet with any such in our future reasoning, as that remarkable congruity between the rational nature and knowledge, we may be aware of its original; and how fixed and unarbitrary such relations are. This farther is to be observed from the consideration that every thing in nature is related to some other thing, nothing being detached from all things else, as shall be shown, that the thus linking together, as it were, the natures of all created things with an uninterrupted connection and agreement is a remarkable beauty, and an undeniable proof of these things being the work of an infinitely wise Creator. And those dependencies, agreements, and mutual fitnesses of one thing to another, the marks of the consistencies between the
ideas

ideas of them, in his mind, where all is harmony and proportion. This is an appearance infinitely impossible to have been observed in the effects of chance. If chance could have any effects, or were any thing but a term for our ignorance of a true cause.

36. Farther, what is said concerning the natures of other things is also to be understood concerning the natures of actions. For the ideas of these were in the divine intellect, as much as the ideas of the agents, or the ideas of any thing else that have a nature. And their relations, conveniencies, and tendencies, to certain ends, are just as they were eternally and necessarily understood in the divine knowledge. Nor is it possible to derive the natures of actions from any thing else. For the natures of all things existing, so far as they have any thing real and positive in them, any true and fixed property, must be derived from that cause that natured them: unless we would say, there are some positive things that arise purely from nothing as their cause. And universally there is no reality that can be the object of our conception, of which we are not justified to seek the original, or rather it is unjustifiable not to do it: and we shall reason ill, if we find it not here. Though there be many things that we obscurely and inconsistently conceive as self-natured, or not natured by any thing, and yet having a nature,

nature, particularly actions, of whose natures we often speak and reason, as independent of all things. But the consideration above places the suitableness of any action, to a certain end, the circumstances remaining the same, above the force of human institution, and shews it any thing rather than arbitrary. Law-givers, when they enjoin the observance of any action, as conducive to the good of the community, do not make the nature of the action, or its natural tendency, to attain the proposed end; but suppose it. Otherwise, any other action, if enjoined by them, would have answered that end as effectually, as Dr. *Clarke* well argues. This holds of the natures of actions; or their immutable tendency to such an end, springs necessarily from the unalterable relation between the ideas of the action and of that end, whether we consider moral actions, or actions purely physical. If yet the morality of actions be not intirely different from their physical nature, and solely to be ascribed to the design and will of the agent; which will is itself an action. As an example of actions purely physical we may take that mechanic principle, mentioned above, No. 24. For the observing that reciprocal proportion between the celerities of the power and weight, and the weight and power themselves, may be properly considered as an action, in the contriver of any machine, and the end proposed,
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is the producing an equilibrium between them. And there is between these an immutable relation: otherwise, the observing a direct, or any other proportion, might produce the same effect. And it is because of the immutability of this relation, that the observing this proportion is justly called a rule, and a principle: and all rules suppose such immutable relations, and fixed natures of the things prescribed; otherwise they would not deserve that appellation.

37. The full and adequate nature, or idea of every thing, with all its real and true properties, was necessarily in the divine mind. Therefore all truths are not only barely consistent among themselves, but, moreover, necessarily consistent; being all necessary and eternal, and having consisted eternally in the intellect of the necessarily existing Being. The eternity of truth, which is itself a self-evident truth, is a strange, a contradictory appearance on the atheistical scheme. It is inconceivable that men, by study and application, should discover several truths, which they see were necessarily and eternally truths before they applied their minds to the search of them, and thus make up a body of science to themselves, as we see is collected at this day, if all these truths and that science were in no mind before. Where were they, and what were they, before our minds conceived them? They who first find them, do not
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make them : they are, like treasure, found by digging for it, which they who find do not create, otherwise they needed not search for it. We see they stand all trials, when once they are found ; nothing is so precious, nothing so durable and firm, nothing so useful. The ordinary answer will be made here, that these truths are in the natures of things. But we make ourselves easy with this answer, without being the wiser for it. This very answer makes a rational man more inquisitive to know what is meant by this expression, *The nature of things*, which is always replied upon him, and with which his mouth is stopped. As we use it, this expression is a mere occult quality. Let us suppose that *Epicurus's* atoms and emptiness is all the nature of things, as *Lucretius* asserts, and the Atheist must be driven to say : How then came this system of truths, this body of science, now discovered, to be necessary and eternal, when there was no mind to conceive, or keep it ? Many abstract truths, all moral truths, are no ways concerned in the nature of atoms and emptiness. Yet these are in the natures of things too ; and eternally there. The innocent ought not to be punished for the guilty, is, and was always, as necessarily true as any other proposition that can be assigned. The nature of things then must necessarily mean something more than atoms and emptiness. If it should be said that
truths

truths are but the properties of our ideas, it is to be considered that many truths have been discovered accidentally, before man had any idea of seeking them. As for instance, the gravity of the atmosphere, and it's equilibrium with such a height of water, found out by *Gallilæo*, upon an accident that had happened to a gardener at *Florence*. See *Wolffius*, *Elementa Aërometriæ*, cap. ii. §. 29. As also men have been forced into the discovery of many properties of numbers, while they were seeking something else than the thing which appeared to them. For the nature of numbers is a stubborn thing, and will not mould itself according to our ideas of them, but rather forces our ideas to follow and observe it. Surely such a nature must be previous to our ideas. Add to this the consideration of infinite series; these cannot be said to be the properties of our ideas.—No man ever supposed that our ideas were infinite, or could have infinite properties. Our ideas of these are but very finite, even after the invention: a few of the terms, and the law of continuation, is all the idea we have of them, even then. They observe their own genius and nature, in spite of the endeavours of the greatest men to render them more manageable, or more effectual and serviceable. It is true, indeed, all truths are the properties of ideas, but certainly all are not so of ours. Truth out of the idea is nothing.

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Therefore, since truth is eternal and necessary, ideas must be such : and an eternal mind is necessary, in which these must have been lodged. Nor is there any thing so necessary as an eternal mind to be the support of these eternal things. This is the only true Being ; all beings else, when tried by reason, are found unsubstantial and yielding. Thus it appears to me, even from the consideration of truth at first hand, the necessity of an eternal mind may be deduced.

38. All falsity, error, or untruth, is the misconceiving the natures of things in the mind of some finite imperfect being, either affirming false properties concerning them, or denying true ones. Therefore, any falsity must be a direct contradiction to some truth or other. For all truths are necessarily consistent among themselves, as was said just now. And this is the reason, or foundation, in the nature of things, of all demonstration *ab absurdo*. For, from the supposed consistency of all truth, and the supposed inconsistency of falsity with any truth, if it can be shown that any proposition is inconsistent with any known truth whatsoever, it is straight concluded false and impossible ; and that rightly. This may let us see the folly and fruitlessness of all attempts to prove a contradiction : For the supposition that a contradiction can be proved true, is itself contradictory ; neither that, nor any other assignable proposition could

could then be proved at all, the method and possibility of proof being supposed ineffectual in the very design. The inconsistency of a true proposition with another, would be no longer a mark that that other were false: nor could we infer from its necessary consistency with another, that that other were true. This, if it were possible, would do the Sceptics work all at once. But we may observe that truth is not to be attacked consistently, nor the foundations of it to be overthrown. It would be an easier task to carry the Alps on the tip of one's finger, than prove a false proposition true, by any method possible.

39. There is no expression more trite and common in every body's mouth than *The nature of things*; and if once any property, or relation of things to each other, appears to be necessary, it is immediately said, it is so in the nature of things, and there it rests. We give ourselves no farther trouble to consider what that expression means; or why an expression, which we do not understand, should terminate all our enquiries, and silence us, as if it were satisfactory. And even when any appearance in material nature is not necessary and universal, but for the most part only, we content ourselves by saying, it is so, or it is so ordered in the nature of things: though this last addition, of being ordered, should lead us naturally, one would think, to make some farther enquiry. Thus, though
this

this expression hath a very rational and instructive meaning, and, if pursued, would lead us by the hand to see the true author of things, and of our nature; yet we suffer ourselves to be amused with it, as a hard word only; and are not aware, that, by the frequent use of it, without the proper meaning, we suffer a very unwarrantable prejudice to creep upon our minds. For there is some hazard that this word, like fate, or chance, should come at length to be thought a sufficient reason for any thing being so as it is. And this neglect, small as it may appear to be, hath been, as I conceive it, one chief reason of the first rise and growth of Atheism. For men, neglecting at first to seek a reason of the most general appearances that occurred to them, satisfied themselves with some name that took off the present uneasiness that there is in doubting and ignorance. And thus chance and fate, and at length nature, became efficient causes in their minds, through a long use and habit of ascribing effects to them. Though they could not so much as affirm that the things meant by these words were real Beings. Thus *Lucretius*, the title of whose book is "Concerning the *nature of things*," and with whom *nature* is a very frequent expression, which he makes some surd thing, every where ascribing effects to it, yet no where shewing us that it hath a power to produce them, is satisfied, when he finds motion in
the

the nature of things, that it is in the nature of matter (*x*)—that gravity belongs to the nature of it; and that therefore all matter is eternally falling down through the infinite abyss, with an infinitely little declination from an uniform direction, by irregular fits and intervals (*y*)—that it is because space is infinite, that matter hath not got to the bottom of it long ere now, and settled there in one unactive heap (*z*). Surely if he had not amused himself with the ambiguous word NATURE, he could not have fallen into these open absurdities. The distinction of nature into *natura naturans*, and *natura naturata*, however much it may favour of the schools, is very significant, and absolutely necessary in this case, to keep us right in our conception of this equivocal word. Nature signifies both parts of this

(*x*) Prima moventur enim per se primordia rerum:
Lib. 2. ver. 132. See also ver. 87, 94, 184, 201.

(*y*) Illud in his quoque te rebus cognoscere avemus;
Corpora cum deorsum rectum per inane feruntur
Ponderibus propriis, incerto tempore ferme,
Incertisque locis. Spatio decedere paulum;
Tantum quod nomen mutatum dicere possis.
Ver. 216.

(*z*) Præterea Spatium summa totius omne
Undique si inclusum certis confisteret oris,
Finitumque foret, jam copia materiai
Undique ponderibus propriis confluet ad imum;
Nec res ulla geri sub cœli tegmine posset;
Nec foret omnino cœlum, neque lumina solis:
Quippe ubi materies omnis cumulata jaceret
Ex infinito jam tempore subsidendo.

Lib. i. ver. 983.

F

distinc-

distinction; and in common use it is made to stand for either indifferently. In the first sense, it is very proper to ascribe effects to it, as the efficient cause; for it is the same thing as the author of nature, or the first cause. But in the last sense, nothing is more improper and false; for itself is but one great effect in that sense, signifying the universality of things effected. However, that the same word hath two such contrary and opposite meanings makes the absurdity more unheeded, even when it is supposed a cause in the last sense; because there is no difference of sound or expression in this proposition.—Nature effects all things—when it is plainly false and necessarily true. But we gradually leave the first meaning quite out of our conception of it, and ascribe efficiency to it in the last so long, till at length we contract a habit of making an ambiguous, vague term stand for a cause in all our discourses on this subject: as if nature was the cause of all the effects we observe in the universe, and yet itself nothing that we could consistently assign, no real Being, but something that had an empire over all Beings. And this inadvertency, even among men that were called philosophers, one may be apt to think, was one chief cause of the first rise of Atheism, as was said.

40. It will, perhaps, illustrate this matter, and make the former deduction appear more necessary, if, after this, we consider
how

how *Lucretius* hath accounted for nature's steady and regular method of working in all her productions: that is, how he hath accounted for nature as a cause. For though he asserts that the first formation of things was purely casual, and without the design of any Being; the atoms being void of sense, or thought (*a*), and the Gods not knowing how to make a world (*b*); yet he takes not such liberty with the productions which we every day behold. Men allow any stories to be told them about what passed long since, in which they think they have not so much concern, and where the difficulty of knowing how matters past makes them less uneasy with unsatisfactory accounts: but they are not so easily to be put off, in what they behold with their eyes. Besides, though the difficulty that chance might have done a thing once, with the help of inattention, might be got over, yet that

- (*a*) Nam certè neque consilio primordia rerum
Ordine se quæque, atque sagaci mente locârunt:
Nec quos quæque darent motus, pepigere profectò:
Sed quia _____

Lib. i. ver. 1020. See also lib. ii. ver. 164.
And in all his long dispute for equivocal generation, from ver. 864 to ver. 1022.

- (*b*) Exemplum porro gignundis rebus, et ipsa
Notities hominum, Divis unde insita primum?
Quid vellent facere ut scirent, animoque viderent?
Quove modo est unquam vis cognita principiorum,
Quidnam inter sese permutato ordine possent,
Si non ipsa dedit specimen Natura creandi?

Lib. v. ver. 182.

this thing should be incessantly repeated, and always according to the same method, seemed necessarily to require a rule. Therefore, such a rule he is forced to allow; and, disputing against the possibility of centaurs, chimæra's, and such other monsters, he says, All things observe the difference set them by the fixed law of nature (*c*). In another place he tells us, that he teaches how necessary it is that every thing should remain in that law in which it was created (*d*). In the place cited above (*b*), he makes nature superior to the Gods; asking how the Gods could ever have come to know the force of the various composition of atoms, and what would be the effect of every combination of them? How they could have had patterns to form men and other things by, if nature had not shown them the art and method of creating?—Where, by the way, we may observe, that if his philosophy had led him to ascribe the work of creating to an intelligent Being, it seems from this place, that he would have refunded the patterns and ideas of created things into the knowledge

- (*c*) Res sic quæque ritu suo procedit, et omnes,
Fœdere naturæ certo, discrimina servant.

Lib. v. ver. 924.

- (*d*) Quoius [Epicuri] ego ingressus vestigia, nunc
rationes

Persequor, ac doceo dictis, quo quæque creata
Fœdere sint, in eo quam sit durare necessum:
Nec validas ævi valeant rescindere leges.

Lib. v. ver. 58.

of

of that Being, as is done above. The passage is worth considering. In other places, he calls nature *creatrix*, *dædala* and *gubernans* (e). In all these he plainly makes nature an efficient cause; some constant, steady faculty, power, or virtue, above the Gods and all Being, and yet no Being itself. For he expressly asserts, that all nature consists of two things, atoms and emptiness (f); disputing against the possibility of any third member (g). And he is so affectedly nice, that he will account for human liberty itself from these two principles (h), telling us it rises from the side motion, or *clinamen* of the atoms, mentioned above, No. 25. In which method, at least, certainly he is right; and he should have shewn the same philosophical exactness of method in all appearances else. And when we find him ap-

(e) Cogere consuëssæt rerum natura creatrix.

Lib. i. ver. 622.

Tellus ipsa parit, naturaque dædala rerum,

Lib. v. ver. 235.

— quâ vi flectat natura gubernans. ver. 78.

(f) Omnis ut est igitur per se, natura duabus
Consistit rebus; nam corpora sunt et inane,
Hæc in quo, sita sunt, et quo diversa moventur.

Lib. ii. ver. 420.

(g) Præterea nihil est, quod possis dicere ab omni
Corpore sejunctum, secretumque esse ab inani:
Quod quasi tertia sit rerum natura reperta. ver. 431.

(h) — Unde hæc est nobis innata potestas:
De nihilo quoniam fieri nil posse videmus.

Lib. ii. ver. 286.

Id facit exiguum clinamen principiorum, ver. 292.

plying his first great and fundamental principle of *De nihilo quoniam fieri nil posse*—or, since from nothing nothing can arise, therefore human liberty comes from atoms and emptiness; it must justify our deducing the natures of things from an adequate and sufficient cause.

41. After this, one's curiosity may be raised to see how he will disengage himself from such a piece of work, upon such unpromising principles as *corpus* and *inane*. The solution, in short, why this surd thing, Nature, in all her operations, works according to a rule; why the difference of the species of vegetables and living creatures is so regularly preserved in generation and vegetation, so that there is not a continual production of new and monstrous plants and animals; and why, as he instances, men do not spring up from the sea, nor herds of cattle burst out from the clouds (*i*); the solution, I say, is this. First, that all things are made of præexistent matter, and not out of nothing (*k*): Secondly, that the atoms, which

(*i*) — Nil semine egeret :

E mare primum homines, è terrâ posset oriri
Squammigerum genus, et volucres; erumpere cœlo
Armenta, atque aliæ pecudes — Lib. i. ver. 161.

(*k*) Lib. i. from verse 150 to 265; especially at 170, where he says,

At nunc seminibus quia certis quidque creatur,
Indè enascitur, atque oras in luminis exit,
Materies ubi inest cujusque, et corpora prima.

Atque

which he calls *primordia rerum*, are perfectly solid, and infrangible by any power (l): And, thirdly, that these atoms have different figures (m). These are the reasons, as they are to be gathered from the several places; and they seem to come to this. Because every thing rises from certain seeds, in which there is a secret faculty, therefore all things cannot rise from all things. These seeds, having a secret faculty, are only solid atoms of different figures: and they are called seeds, to give a more philosophical air to the account, from the analogy of plants and animals rising from

Atque hæc re nequeunt ex omnibus omnia gigni,
Quod certis in rebus inest secreta facultas.—
Quorum nil fieri manifestum est: omnia quando
Paulatim crescunt (ut par est) semine certo:
Crescendoque genus servant; ut noscere possis
Quæque suâ de materiâ grandescere, alique.

Ver. 189.

(l) Lib. i. from ver. 565 to 635. At ver. 586, he says,

— Nam, si primordia rerum
Commutari aliquâ possent ratione revictâ,
Incertum quoque jam constet, quid posset oriri,
Quid nequeat—

(m) Nec tamen omnimodis connecti posse putandum est
Omnia; nam volgo fieri portenta videres;
Semiferas hominum species existere; et altos
Interdum ramos egigni corpore vivo;
Multaque connecti terrestria membra marinis:—
Quorum nil fieri manifestum est omnia quando
Seminibus certis, certâ genitrice, creata
Conservare genus crescentia posse videmus.
— Ita quamque necesse est
Dissimili constare figurâ principiorum.

Lib. ii. ver. 699, et seq.

seeds. But, unfortunately, his reader must remember, that there is no man a fiercer assertor of equivocal generation in that dispute referred to above (*a*), and in his account, especially of his first mortals springing out of the ground (*n*). And this notwithstanding that he asserts here, that the discrimination of species is preserved, because of seeds, in which is a secret faculty. Indeed, solid atoms of different figures are but a poor efficient cause, of themselves, to effect order and regularity, in all the species of animals and plants, of which there is so great a variety; to guide the motions of the heavenly bodies, to work up so curiously the wonderful structure of the human body, and the difficult problem of the circulation; to fit the ear with so much skill for receiving sound, and to perfect the eye according to the laws of optics! But their chief effect is, That a certain combination of them, from lifeless and sluggish matter, becomes rational, learned, and wise, which he is so rudely express in asserting (*o*). The philosophy that takes for granted that the effect may rise in perfection above its cause,

(*n*) Lib. v. ver. 805.

(*o*) Quòd si delira hæc furiosaque cernimus esse,
Et ridere potest ex non ridentibu' factus;
Et sapere, et doctis rationem reddere dictis,
Non ex seminibus sapientibus, atque disertis.

Lib. ii. ver. 984.
and

and that so enormously, needs never be at a loss to solve as many phenomena as can be proposed to it.

42. Now, can any thing more convince us, than to see the natures of things deduced from such an original, and that in spite of a thousand absurdities and contradictions? This shews the necessity of deriving them from their true and consistent origin, as, it is presumed, is done above; and of clearing up that ill-understood expression, the nature of things, which was a refuge for our ignorance, or our obstinacy, as oft as we found ourselves puzzled. But lest it should be thought that this account, which *Lucretius* gives, is out of date, not urged now, or is not the best that can be given on atheistical principles, it is fit to observe to those who have not considered it before, that this is as good an account as hath been given, or can be given, and that, since no consistent account can be given from false principles, all the difference that can be, is to speak, more or less clearly, so that one may know where to fix the absurdity, more or less easily. *Lucretius* hath the advantage in this point. He was concerned that *Memmius* should understand him: the desire of gaining over his friend made him spare no pains to become intelligible, though he owns the difficulty of explaining clearly the *obscura reperta* of the Greek authors, in his tongue.

tongue (*p*). The modern Atheists, on the other hand, have either fallen into, or wisely affected obscurity (*q*). They, from time to time, have new-furbished two or three of this man's notions, and set up with that slender stock to propagate atheism. What answers him, will answer them all. The Epicurean atheism is the most desperate, fiercest kind of it, including the malignity of all the other sorts, and a great deal more, proper to itself only. They pretended a vast superiority in reason and philosophy, and to be against a supreme Being and religion out of principle and conviction. And *Lucretius* hath all the reason that is to be found for it collected into one (*r*). He is excessively fond of it, cannot moderate himself in the praises of *Epicurus*, and other patrons of it, and is not a little vain of what he himself hath

(*p*) Sed tua me virtus tamen, et sperata voluptas
 Suavis amicitiae quemvis perferre laborem.
 Suadet, et inducit nocteis vigilare serenas,
 Quærentem, dictis quibus, et quo carmine demum
 Clara tuæ possim præpandere lumina menti,
 Res quibus occultas penitus convivere possis.

Lib. i. ver. 141.

(*q*) Dr. *Clarke* gives a pregnant instance of this in Mr. *Hobbs's* explication of the nature and original of sensation, and consciousness, in his *Demonstration of the Being and Attributes of a God*. Page 96, et seq.

(*r*) Upon this account, I think, it is a great good luck that his book is preserved intire from the injuries of time, that the great strength of Atheism may be known, which otherwise might have been pretended greater.

added

added to it (s). He frequently calls it madness, *desipere est*, to be of a contrary opinion to what he advances. From some places it appears he was a man of a very clear judgment; wherever the nature of his subject would admit of such, he hath not failed to give conclusive arguments: such are those for the immensity of space, and the solidity of some parts of matter (r), and the quick motion of light. In other places, where he is maintaining untenable positions, yet he advances the best shews of reason, and most plausible arguments; as in the third Book concerning the materiality of the soul, which all modern Atheists borrow. As to the other kind of Atheists, those who asserted an eternal succession of effects and causes, the nature of their affirmation engaged them in one sort of dispute only. They were not concerned in the debate about the origination of the world, or that matter was the efficient cause of all the appearances in nature. Their hypothesis was only a handsome way of shunning the in-

(s) Conquisita diu, dulcique reperta labore
Digna tuâ pergam disponere carmina vitâ,
Lib. iii. ver. 421.

Nunc age dicta meo dulci quæsitâ labore
Percipe——
Lib. ii. ver. 729.

(r) If one compares Dr. Clarke's accurate demonstration of this, at the end of his fourth Reply to Mr. Leibnitz, with verse 512, et seq. of the first Book of *Lucretius*, he will find the thought much the same.

conveniency

conveniency of these assertions (*u*). The affair was soon terminated with them, by shewing that their assertion was a mistake, and proceeded on a contradictory supposition. But the Epicurean controversy spread itself through all natural philosophy. It is true, the maintainers of an eternal succession, when they find their point no longer tenable, may shift a little, and retire to the main strength of Atheism, the fortuitous concourse of atoms, where there is more scope, and such a multiplicity of heads to be disputed, that they are sure to stand their ground longer. But this only makes the consideration of the Epicurean scheme the more necessary.

43. There is one thing which is justly to be wondered at in this author, and might perhaps be started as an objection to the current opinion concerning him. It is, that he so frequently mentions the gods, and allows them an existence. From this one might ask if it is not unfair to accuse him of atheism? One of the chief reasons why he praises *Epicurus* so much, is, that he spoke many things well and wisely of the immortal Gods (*x*). He himself, in

(*u*) Yet it is not to be understood as if all were Atheists who asserted the eternity of the world; *Aristotle* was not, nor were the Platonists. See Dr. *Clarke's* Demonstration, &c. page 33, et seq. with the notes.

(*x*) Cum bene presertim multa, ac divinitus ipsis
Immortalibu' de divinis dare dicta fuërit,
Atque omnem rerum naturam pandere dictis.

Lib. v. ver. 53.

many

many places, celebrates them as enjoying peace and undisturbed tranquillity (*y*), and describes their abodes in very pompous verses (*z*). This is a knot, which the critics, possibly, can better solve. Only let it be here observed, that his gods may be as safely denied as owned. It was his good pleasure to allow them. After he had got over the origination of things without their help, and when he did not think them necessary to the original production of nature, and the constant preservation of that beauty and order, which we see obtain in it, there was no reason forcing him to own any such Being; or whereby he could have been convinced himself, or satisfied another, that they were necessary, rather than superfluous. He could not have proved the necessity or existence of an eternal mind, against one who denied it, by any possible argument after this: so that his deities are to be reckoned intirely arbitrary and nominal only.

- (*y*) Omnis enim per se Divûm natura necesse est
Immortali ævo summâ cum pace fruatur,
Semota à nostris rebus sejunctaque longè;
Nam privata dolore omni, privata periclis,
Ipsa suis pollens opibus, nihil indiga nostri
Nec bene pro meritis capitur, nec tangitur ira.

Lib. i. ver. 57.

- (*z*) Apparet Divûm numen, sedesque quietæ,
Quas neque concutiunt venti; nec nubila nimbia
Adspargunt; neque nix acri concreta pruina
Cana cadens violat: semperque innubilis æther
Integit, et largè diffuso lumine ridet.

Lib. iii. ver. 18.

Perhaps

Perhaps he complied so far with men's weakness and prejudices, as still to retain the name. He speaks of his gods as depending upon nature, which affords them all things (a). He assigns them every where bodies, which, he says, unless space and matter made up one immensity between them, could not subsist for one hour's time (b). He speaks of nothing but matter in their constitution: for all nature consists of two parts, space and matter. And as to these bodies, there is one passage where he refines them quite out of existence again: saying, that their abode is in no part of the world; that their nature is so slender that it can scarce be perceived by the discernment of the mind; that it is not tactible; for he makes touch the criterion of matter:

Tangere enim et tangi nisi corpus nulla potest res.

And all this he promises to insist largely upon (c); but when he comes to do it, he ascribes the being of the gods to the folly and

(a) Just after the last citation it follows:

*Omnia suppeditat porro Natura: neque ulla
Res animi pacem delibrat tempore in ullo.*

Lib. iii. ver. 23.

(b) *Aut etiam alterutrum nisi terminet alterum eorum,
Simplice naturâ, et pateat tantum immoderatum:
Nec mare, nec tellus, nec cœli lucida templa
Nec mortale genus, nec Divûm corpora sancta
Exiguum possent horâi sistere tempus.*

Lib. i. ver. 1011.

(c) *Illud item non est ut possis credere, Sedes
Esse Deûm sanctas, in mundi partibus ullis.*

Tenuis

and credulity of men; saying, that they assigned life and sense to them from the dreams that they had in their sleep, or their visions while awake; and that for equally light reasons, they supposed them strong and eternal, not being able to conceive the appearances they beheld in the heavens without such a power as they fancied them to have. And then he concludes,

O genus infelix humanum (d)!

Tenuis enim natura Deum, longeque remota
Sedibus à nostris, animi vix mente videtur,
Quæ quoniam manuum tactum suffugit et ictum—
Quæ tibi posterius largo Sermone probabo.

Lib. v. ver. 147.

- (d) Nunc quæ causa Deum per magnas numina gentis
Pervolgarit, et ararum compleverit urbeis,—
Non ita difficile est rationem reddere verbis.
Quippe etenim jam tum Divum mortalia sæcla
Egregias animo facies vigilante videbant,
Et magis in somnis mirando corporis auctu.
His igitur sensum tribuebant, propterea quod
Membra movere videbantur, vocesque superbas
Mittere pro facie præclarâ, et viribus amplis:
Æternamque dabant vitam, quia semper eorum
Suppeditabatur facies, et forma manebat,
(Et manet omnino) et quod tantis viribus auctos
Non temere ullâ vi convinci posse putabant,
Fortunisque ideo longè præstare putabant.
Quod mortis timor haud quemquam vexaret eorum,
Et simul in somnis quia multa, et mira videbant
Efficere, et nullum capere ipsos inde laborem.

Lib. v. ver. 1161.

Nec delubra Deum placido cum pectore adibis;
Nec de corpore quæ sancto simulacra feruntur
In mentes hominum divinæ nuntia formæ,
Suscipere hæc animi tranquillâ pace valebis.

Lib. vi. ver. 74.

So that if it appears strange to any that he should allow the gods an existence, it seems he solves the appearance himself, by removing them again out of his philosophy.

44. Concerning this matter, it is, I think, to be concluded, that when once a person denies those evidences whereby the existence of a supreme Being can be rationally inferred, his denying or asserting such a Being, after that, is of no weight or consequence. He hath left himself no argument to persuade himself or others. It is, as if, in geometry, one should deny all axioms, definitions, and principles, in the lump, and pretend, notwithstanding, after that, to determine of the truth and conclusiveness of the subsequent propositions, founded on those axioms. When one denies all arguments that could prove a thing to be, and yet asserts that it is, it looks as if he were refining on the ways of ridiculing reason; refusing his assent to it, and pretending to be convinced without it.

Consequence of the Existence of an all-perfect First Cause.

WHATEVER proposition is inconsistent with, or destructive of this truth, cannot be true.

It follows from the certainty of the existence of such a Being, that all truth must be consistant and uniform, as flowing originally

ginally from the nature of this Being, where nothing can be inconsistent, or self-destructive. Truth, with respect to a finite understanding, is the exact knowledge of the nature of things, and of their relations one to another. And as these natures and relations are real and consistent, so the knowledge of them is Truth. In the divine intellect, in an infinite understanding, truth extends to all compatible ideas, all ideas not self-destructive, all possibilities. All truth being originally a possibility; could any two truths be inconsistent, or mutually destroy each other, they would hinder each other's possibility: So neither of them would be possible, neither would be true, a manifest contradiction.

The force of this consequence being duly considered, it must be want of attention, want of equity, or want of a capacity of judging of what is truly satisfactory, if any proposition, that may occur to us in the prosecution of this inquiry, be not rejected as absurd, if it be inconsistent with the great leading truth before asserted.

SECTION II.

A general View of the Subject.

PROPOSITION I.

IF there be no period beyond the present, no state after death; then is our existence a thing without design, irrelative, incomplete.

1. On that supposition, we came into existence we dare not enquire how; for we must keep free of a cause that had competent power, wisdom and knowledge to produce us, lest we render our whole existence liable to the direction and government of this Being: and it is manifestly for no purpose; for chance proposes nothing; we are left without a rule of action; for then faith and truth have nothing sacred in them, being things of mere human invention; might and superior force become the supreme rule; weakness and want of power become equal to want of justice and of a good cause; and society can mean nothing but a cessation of injuries, till we watch an opportunity, or gather force to oppress all those that stand in the way of our pleasure. And we lose our existence again as unaccountably, without cause or design, being born merely to propagate

propagate our species, and, like insects, continue in being just long enough to leave our like behind us: And these we propagate for no other purpose, but that they may leave their like behind them, who are only to answer the same design, by continuing their kind, and so on without end. Thus there is a succession of beings, who all succeed purely for succession's sake, whose only business is to appear and disappear, without any more exalted or important view. This represents the Author of our being under the image of a person, who with the first lighted torch should light a second, and then throw away the first, and immediately with the second light a third, and dash out the second, and just so throw by the third, after it has served to light a fourth, and thus continue in an endless course of lighting and extinguishing.

*Inque brevi spatio mutantur sæcla animantum;
Et quasi cursores vitæ lampada tradunt.*

Lucretius, B. ii.

Could any thing be invented more exclusive of all wise design, more whimsical, more absurd than this? If this supposition be the true one, we are to conclude that the whole design of the Supreme Creator in giving us a being, is that we may exist a short while in misery, (as will appear below,) and that having been instrumental in the procreation of other miserable beings,

we may cease to be. For since by the supposition there is no after-state, and that after death we are nothing, all the possible designs in giving us existence must be finished in this present period. This is literally making all men for nought.

2. Our existence is, on this supposition, irrelative. But if it be shewn that our pleasures, our faculties and powers, and especially our rational nature, stretch out their relations to something beyond the present period, and bear a respect to things which do not happen in this state, then we cannot be the beings in the supposition, whose existence can have no relation lying without this present period. In considering these relations the mind follows the steps of nature, and in the knowledge of relations, dependencies, and connections, consists the greatest part of our knowledge of the natures of things. But if we know any thing of the nature of man, all it's relations and respects cannot possibly be crowded within this short period, as will evidently appear hereafter.

3. Our existence is, on this supposition, incomplete. So that after we have been miserable here for a while, we suddenly cease to be, or are as if we had never been. Every thing here is incoherent, abrupt, and detached from every thing before or after it. It ceases to be the work of an infinitely wise Being, who is the Author of every thing that exists, and who, as such, must have made

made every thing for good and wise ends : As if in mere caprice he had given us our being without any certain view or design, and then took it from us again in a peevish fit, while we were improving our nature, perfecting our reason, and entering always deeper and deeper into the contemplation of his adorable wisdom, and the relations of endless existence. In a word, this supposition is agreeable to nothing, unless it be that we get our existence by chance, and lose it again by fate ; neither of which words have any signification in reason and philosophy. So inconsistent a thing is human life upon the scheme of the Atheist, who laughs at the supposition of an after-period. For a lively image of it, see the ludicrous description in *Lucian's* *Necyomantia* : 'Εδόκει μοι ὁ τῶν ἀνθρώπων Βίος — κ.τ.λ. The life of man appeared to me, says *Menippus*, to resemble a farce, of which Fortune was the poet, who disposed the several characters of the drama, adapting to each their several parts and dresses, without any consistency, plan, or design. One she ushers in with guards, a diadem, and other ensigns of royalty ; another she produces in the mean habit of a slave ; a third she introduces adorned with grace and comeliness ; the next she exposes to ridicule in a deformed and contemptible figure. She appears to have no concern but to fill the farce with jumbled groupes of all the various charac-

ters that can be imagined. But when the farce is ended, each actor drops his borrowed habit, and silently sneaks off the stage. Some obstinate blockheads indeed are apt to fret, when Fortune is about to reclaim her own, not considering for how short a time this unreal mockery was ordained to last. *Lucian*, in his *Charon*, draws a striking picture of the hopes and fears, and foolish occupations of poor mortals, comparing them to the froth and bubbles, that rise in a muddy torrent, some small ones carried along with the stream, others swelling with the ruin of their neighbours, and bursting from excessive bulk. When *Charon*, shocked at their folly and madness, is going to raise his voice, and remind them of their mortality, *Mercury* bids him forbear; for the ears of these wretched creatures of a day would still be deaf to his remonstrances. Some very few choice spirits, he adds, need not be told a secret they have themselves discovered already. Being by meditation reconciled to the idea of their final extinction, they laugh in a corner at the presumptuous hopes of all the rest of mankind. They rail to no purpose; and are hated and despised, in their turn, by the whole species.—Can such be the work of a Being infinitely wise and good?—

PROPO-

PROPOSITION II.

IT is the same thing, in respect of the present inquiry, whether a conscious being, such as man, be annihilated at death, or lose it's consciousness for ever then, the substance still remaining.

For if it loses it's consciousness for ever, it ceases to be capable of pleasure or pain, happiness or misery, thought or perception. But the present inquiry is concerning a state of future perception.

CONSEQUENCE I.

IF the human soul be only a property, or some modification of matter, or the result of some modification of matter, the conscious being is as much annihilated, if that property or modification is ultimately destroyed at death, as if the matter itself were then destroyed. And if the faculty of thinking be only a property superadded to certain systems of matter by infinite power, (the impossibility of both which suppositions might be made apparent, but that is here unnecessary, the argument deduced from that impossibility being only accessory to the main point) the same consequence will follow, if matter be ultimately deprived of such property at death. And lastly, if the human soul is a substance spe-

cifically different from matter, it is the same thing whether it be supposed to be ultimately deprived of consciousness, when it is separated from the body, or to be then annihilated.

2.

BUT supposing, for this time at least, that it were possible that the human soul were only a modification of matter, or a property superadded to certain systems of matter by infinite power; if it can be shewn that the justice, the goodness, the wisdom or truth of the necessarily existing Being are concerned, engaged, or pledged, as it were, for the preservation of it after death, it would follow, by the Consequence to the 1st Section, that it must as certainly be preserved and still remain after death, as if it were a substance specifically different from matter. And this consideration makes it unnecessary to insist at present upon the immediate determination of this point, whether the human soul be material or immaterial. *Lucretius* himself did not think it enough to prove the soul mortal, that he had, as he thought, proved it material: But after he had pretended to establish the materiality of it, in Book iii. from verse 94 to 418, he there prepares himself to produce a direct proof of it's mortality:

Nuns

*Nunc age, nativos animantibus, & mortale
Esse animos, animasq; leves, ut noscere possis;
Conquisita diu, dulcique reperta labore
Digna tuâ pergam disponere carmina vitâ,*

PROPOSITION III.

TO be the same conscious being, it is necessary that it have a consciousness that it is the same being: or the sameness of consciousness is as necessary as the sameness of substance.

For upon the supposition that consciousness and the substance, to which it belongs, are separable, the same substance, without consciousness, might perhaps be called the same being, though with no great propriety of speech; but not the same conscious being, if consciousness be supposed separate from the substance. For sameness, or identity, is here applied to the whole complex, conscious being. But if the substance is the same, and the consciousness the same, then it is the same conscious being in all the propriety of thought and speech.

CONSEQUENCE I.

CONSCIOUSNESS, in all created beings, is successive, since there is a past, present, and future in their existence, and the last consciousness in any of them must have a relation to it's former consciousness to make it
I the

the same conscious being : or all the moments and periods in it's successive consciousness must be connected together by a chain of references, and relations, to make the consciousness the same : so that it may bring it's past consciousness to present view, and that one identity of consciousness may run through the whole existence of it.

2.

If this chain of references, or relations between the parts of our consciousness, is quite broken, then we have lost so much of our consciousness, and by consequence so much of our being as lies beyond the rupture, and our existence is so far mutilated. But if, by any power, the relation should be again renewed, then like an extinguished taper, which upon the readmission of air, breaks out anew into a flame, we recover our consciousness, duration, and being.

3.

If the references between some extreme parts of our consciousness should remain firm, but be broken between some intermediate parts, there happens a chasm in our consciousness and being. The consciousness, and consequently the existence, as conscious beings, of us men, is liable to be shortened and mutilated both these ways. None of us recollects when we first began

to be conscious ; and none of us has a register of uninterrupted consciousness, nor of all our past consciousness, interrupted or continuous.

4.

Of contingent, or caused beings, the more perfect any species is, the more strong and entire will these relations be, between the parts of their successive consciousness. A Being infinitely perfect, necessary and unsuccessive, has it's consciousness, like it's essence, one with the most perfect unity. For such a Being to admit any chasms in it's consciousness, or mutilations of existence, implies a contradiction. But there can be but one such Being. Of other beings the less of their conscious existence they lose, the more perfect they are, as approaching nearer to the most perfect Being. The closer and stronger this relation is between the several parts of their consciousness, it is the nearer to the being one.

5.

THE more perfect any species of living beings is, the more close and entire will the relations between all the parts of their consciousness be, or the greater and more perfect will be their power of making all past perceptions present. Hence it follows that beings superior to man must have a more close and united relation between the parts

parts of their consciousness than man has; so that it may cost them less trouble to bring back their past perceptions; or more of them may be in view at once; or possibly in some supreme orders, having been once in view, they may always remain so: whence will proceed a knowledge perfectly intuitive in one sense, where all the past consciousness is still present. For intuitive knowledge signifies a knowing without the tedious deductions we are forced to use, an immediate applying to the nature of things themselves, or possibly to the fountain of nature, the *natura naturans*, and seeing directly, at one complex view, what inferior orders of beings see but successively and by consequences.

6.

WHEN any past perception is brought into view again, whether by any conatus or exertion of the percipient, or *ab extra* only, or without any design of his, such being in view is what we call Memory. For memory is only a thing's being in the perception, together with another secondary and concomitant perception that it was there once at least before. And if a thing is in the perception ever so often, if this secondary perception, that it was there before, be wanting, it is still as new to the percipient as it was the first time, and cannot be called Memory.

7. THE

7.

THE perceptions of living beings may be related to each other two ways extremely different, the one, when a being exerts an internal power to make a past perception again present; the other, when the perception, or the resemblance of it, is offered by some external cause, without any exertion on the part of the percipient. Hence it appears that there are two kinds of memory specifically different, an active and a passive memory.

8.

THE great fundamental difference between rational and irrational creatures, men and brutes, appears to be this, that those have, and these want active memory: or that man relates and connects his perceptions voluntarily, but brutes not. Reason implies or supposes memory in general, for without memory, whatever is in the mind would be a train of unconnected and unrelated perceptions, which is inconsistent with a power producing a chain of depending consequences: And without active memory, whatever is in the mind would be related by accident only with respect to us; which is inconsistent with a power, by which we bring together any two perceptions, or ideas, that we may see their agreement or diversity. In a word, reasoning supposes our comparing,

ing, and comparing supposes our bringing together perceptions that are in nature successive, and consequently distant, that is, it supposes active memory. Inferior animals, at least the domestic, and such as are familiar with mankind, must, or may have as many and as various original perceptions as man has; since the original perceptions in both species come alike from sensation; as *Mr. Locke* has shewn concerning man, which, *à fortiori*, must be true concerning brutes. So that all the difference between them, as percipients, must arise from the different way of working with the same original materials, or from the difference of power in referring, juxta-positing, or comparing these original ideas. There may indeed be other differences between some species of living creatures, prior to this now mentioned, that for instance of having fewer or more senses, or ways of perceiving, or that of having fewer or more perceptions from the same sense. But this regards not the inquiry into the specific difference between man and brutes: For if man is rightly differenced from the order of brutes nearest to him, he is more strongly differenced from all the inferior orders.

- 9 -

SINCE reason implies or supposes active memory, it follows that it implies or supposes liberty; this kind of memory being only

only the power of reflecting back, and applying voluntarily our attention to any past perception, and consequently to any part of our past consciousness, within certain limits at least. The power of reflecting, and applying, is here opposed to the necessity of doing it on the one hand, and the necessity of not doing it on the other. But we are not free in seeing the identities, diversities, agreements, or disagreements of our ideas: We are not free in seeing the natures, habitudes, and relations of those perceptions, upon which we have thus freely and voluntarily reflected back our attention. For every percipient, if it shall bring together and compare any two perceptions, must of necessity, according to it's faculty of discernment, see whether they agree or disagree, or how far they are the same or different. It must, by it's original constitution, be thus far purely passive in it's perception, being active, and free only in reflecting and applying it's attention to it. So that it is wonderful that there should ever have been any dispute in the world, whether a rational creature could be a free creature; since the pronouncing the creature rational is the same thing as the pronouncing it free in other words. And there must have been a strange perverseness in those who first made this a dispute; perverseness surely, for inattention it could not have been in those who broached it first, since to find
out

out any colour of an argument against human liberty, required great application and subtlety in the inventor (e).

10.

FROM Consequence 8 it follows, that brutes are not free beings in the same sense that man is free; since they are not free in exercising an empire and command over their own perceptions: For as they want active memory, they are without reason, without liberty of this kind, by which the percipient exercises dominion over his own perceptions. But on the other hand, it seems they have that kind of liberty, by which the percipient exercises a power over the limbs of the body, to produce spontaneous motion in them. This spontaneity they appear to possess, in opposition to the necessity of motion in mere machines. They want, in short, that first and noblest kind of liberty, which respects the mind, and which man is endued with; but they are not mere machines, if they produce spontaneous motion in their bodies. Against the sophists therefore, who raise these foolish and unprofitable bickerings about hu-

(e) It happens to human liberty as to motion, that it is easier to feel it, and be certain of the reality of it, than accurately to explain it's nature. Though nothing is more self-evident in life than liberty and motion, yet sophists in the schools have attempted to dispute both out of the world.

man liberty, the friends of common sense and sound philosophy, should constantly deduce their instances of it, from the first and highest kind of liberty, that over the perceptions of the mind, which is the cause, rather than from the motions of the body, which are but the consequence and effect of the other.

II.

CONSIDERING the specific difference of the two natures, of men, and brutes, the one being rational, the other void of reason, and consequently destitute of those perfections, which are the effects of being endued with the power of reflection, ignorant of itself, and all things else; it will follow that whatever argument there is for the immortality of the human soul, arising from it's being endued with that power, which gives it a relation to a future state, must be inapplicable to brutes. This observation will hold good, though it should be found, as it may, that the sentient part in brutes is immaterial, as well as in men; because, with respect to the argument in question, immateriality is not brought under consideration. But we often meet with those, whose ambition points downward, vain of being pretendedly humble enough to reckon themselves no better than the brutes; or those, who to defend themselves from conviction, in certain importunate suggestions of conscience,

science, do all they can to confound the two natures, and with great pomp of argument, to set Jowler on an equal footing with his owner. But it is all in vain: In spite of ourselves we are placed above them, and cannot at pleasure divest ourselves entirely of the inseparable marks of our superiority. We may ignorantly or interestedly endeavour to betray the dignity of our nature, or pretend to resign it out of affected modesty: But that does not alter the proportion and measure, by which things were originally designed by their Almighty Author, and which, in virtue of that design, must permanently obtain. Brutes are incapable of the rational pleasures and pains we are capable of. No rule of action, above sense, can be a rule to them; for they are incapable of any of the constituent ideas, which enter even this simple rule; We should do unto others, as we wish they should do unto us. Their nature therefore stands clear of that endless train of relations, which the being made rational must induce upon the nature of man, which are so many indissoluble links, joining, and referring to each other, different parts of his existence.

12.

WE may be convinced how irrelative of an after-period of existence is an irrational nature, by reflecting that the actions of such a being concern the preservation of the individual,

dividual, or of the species only, and consequently are all referred to the present period. A creature actuated by sense and instinct merely, may be compared to one travelling in so dim a twilight, that he sees precisely so much only of the road, as where to place his steps, ignorant and unconcerned about all things else around him, and thus jogging on still thoughtlessly, till his course is finished. But reason unhoodwinks the traveller, lets him see much of the way before and behind him, and a vast and various landscape of existence round him. By a power of reflecting on these things we contract an acquaintance and familiarity with them, and thus extend the views and relations of our nature, without ourselves, and without the present period. This power adds extension, as it were, to our momentary being, which otherwise would resemble a mathematical point, moving without leaving any trace of itself: So that it can co-exist in some manner with what is past, and what is to come, launching, backward and forward, into the past and future lapses of duration. By this power we begin to rise above our former confined state, and that of our fellow animals, whom we leave still imprisoned in their own individual self; while we carry our views to nature abroad; adverting on Being in general, the necessary self-existence of a First Cause, the origination of all things besides, their causes, ends;

mutual respects, priority, dependence, difference, &c. till at length we have made up to ourselves a body of science, a system of truth. By this power, in short, we are enabled to do infinitely more than what regards this period only; beginning a new kind of being, which seems adapted to endless duration; because, with our views and knowledge of things, our relations to them, our desires, our capacities of continuing and extending those relations are always growing, and still capable of endless increase, as shall be shewn at large in the following propositions.

13.

ALL animals inferior to man appear to have been produced perfect in their kind at first, and finished in their natures, without any pains or application of their own, being furnished with a domestic principle of action, which confines them within themselves, and to the present minute of their existence, which never rises above a traceless moving point. Man alone comes into the world weak, helpless, incomplete in his nature, unfurnished with this blind, yet unerring principle of action: But he becomes with labour master of another principle, of a nature extremely different, which rises, like a cone, from a point, still stretching out into something greater, the nearer he draws to his exit. Will any unprejudiced person affirm

affirm that two such unlike natures were, by the infinitely good, wise, and powerful Author of all things, designed for a like end?

14.

It may be urged that the scale of being, the variety or magnificence of the creation, required that, among creatures equally perishable, some should be governed by one faculty, and some by another; some by sense, and some by reason. But it can never be possible that any consideration of variety, or magnificence, should take off the absurdity of misfitting the governing faculty to the nature, and duration of these creatures. The unsuitableness of the faculty of reason to this short period shall be fully proved. Besides, unless we would affirm that no caused being endures for ever, there must be still some being at which endless duration begins, or with whom this high privilege commences. And reason appears to be the first faculty in the rising scale, that carries the certain marks of endless existence along with it. Perhaps, if we push our enquiry in this matter to it's just length, we may find probability to assert that even the immaterial part of brutes does not perish ultimately, when it is separated from the material. But it will not follow from thence, that it so remains, as to constitute the same conscious being: for it has been shewn that this would require a command over it's own perceptions, which brutes appear not to possess.

SECTION III.

The natural Affections of Man indicate a Future State.

PROPOSITION I.

IN a world produced by an infinitely powerful, good, and wise Cause, every apprehending faculty of living beings, must have it's correspondent gratification apprehensible by it.

CONSEQUENCE I.

THE original, and very possibility of gratification consists in the congruity, which there is between the faculty and the object. There is a relation between them subsisting in the very design of the First Cause, and consequently inseparable from their nature, and making a necessary part of it. The gratifications of sense have indeed a foundation in the nature of things, or there is a real relation between the apprehending faculty and the object; but this relation is not permanent or fixed, because the nature of both is variable, and not made to abide: Whereas the relation and congruity between reason, and the objects gratifying it, is above all

all casualty. Truth is always one, or immutably the same. This cannot be said of the irrational pleasures of man, which are often contradictory, and have no permanent foundation in the nature of things, but springing from ignorance, folly, vanity, suppose a defect, or want of reason.

2.

ALL percipients naturally feel an affection for pleasure, and aversion from pain; for pleasure and pain are only those opposite kinds of perceptions, which living beings naturally affect and aversate; pleasure, in other words, being the compendious name we use to express a perception that gratifies our natural desires, as pain is for a perception that thwarts, or is opposite to them. Desire and aversion presuppose an idea of the object as pleasant or painful. For if a percipient could affect an object, without apprehending any thing about it, or whether it were pleasant or painful, or neither; it might at the same instant affect and not affect the same object: For we must apprehend so much of the object we desire as to think it pleasant, otherwise it would not be the object of desire, according to the maxim, *ignoti nulla cupido*. Our desire indeed may be misplaced: We may be mistaken in the nature of the object; and it may prove painful. But to desire evil as evil, or pain as pain, is a natural impossibility. It is an

equal impossibility, or contradiction to nature, that we should not desire a greater pleasure in preference to a less. If it be said that a present pleasure is often preferred to a greater future pleasure, we must observe, that whatever the present pleasure may be in reality, it always appears, upon these occasions, greater, and consequently preferable, upon some consideration or other. Hence we must desire the greatest pleasure most. For in comparing the greater pleasure with the less, the excess is pure pleasure, without a balance. There is pleasure on that side, to no pleasure on the other: And consequently this excess of pleasure apprehended, must have a proportionable desire corresponding to it.

3.

KNOWLEDGE is the gratification correspondent to the rational faculty, and is therefore pleasant to the human mind by the nature of things. It is of all pleasures the noblest, the most desirable. It is the pleasure of the understanding, or of the rational nature, as agreeable scents, tastes, &c. are of the sensitive. Knowledge is the source of infinite or endless gratification. For the ideas and compatibilities in the divine intellect are infinite: The power, the wisdom, the goodness of God, are infinite: The instances of these perfections exhibited in the visible and invisible world are numberless:
And

And all these are the objects of knowledge, which being by nature pleasant, thus becomes a source of endless pleasure. From hence this remarkable consequence follows, that it implies a contradiction that the rational desire of pleasure should be ever ultimately satisfied, or so satisfied that we should be content to enjoy no more pleasure either in duration or quantity. But be it minded that this is concluded of rational pleasure only, or the pleasure of rational nature; since of every other kind of pleasure, a satiety, a loathing, an aversion succeeds, through a deficiency of the appetite, or of the object; that is, pleasure not rational turns to pain. When we consider this property of the rational nature, that it's desires cannot be ultimately satisfied, we cannot help concluding that this is a nature designed for endless existence, if the Author of it was not unwise, or impotent, or cruel.

4.

THE rational nature cannot be improved, but by the attainment of knowledge, for we bring with us into the world a bare capacity of acquiring knowledge, unfilled, unfurnished with actual ideas. It follows therefore that the improvement, the perfection at least of our rational nature has a relation to things, which cannot happen in this period of existence; since our capacity of knowledge cannot be filled within a compass

pass of seventy, or eighty years, but is endlessly extensible. The pursuit of perfect knowledge has a relation to the attainment of it, which does not happen here; the gift of reason to the use and improvement of it, and the improvement to the perfection of reason, which does not happen here. The capacity we have for pleasure in the contemplation of truth remains, and must remain unsatisfied here. Even the pleasure, which the rational nature finds in the practice of virtue, may become no rational pleasure, but a delusion of reason, being only a pleasure conditionally, if there be an hereafter. Our rational nature, considered as serving to those purposes only, to which sense and instinct serve brutes, appears amazingly irrelative and disproportioned. Take it in any other respect, it is one constant and continued reference to things designed to take place, after this period is past.—A question may naturally be here proposed.—Does it not contradict this established truth, that there exists an infinitely wise, good, just, powerful Author of all things, of our rational natures especially, to say that he has given us desires and appetites, which are never to be satisfied? If the consistency of his wisdom and goodness is apparent, in that every other appetite and desire ceases, when it ceases to be of use to us, and is at last finally antiquated and laid aside; but we find that this desire grows the more importunate, when

when it's use and value, upon the supposition of no hereafter, becomes daily more inconsiderable; what shall we say? Has our Creator given us an existence here, which is finally to be broken off in the midst of visible designs uncompleted, without being followed by those effects, to which he has made them bear a natural and constant relation? Does it appear consistent even with finite wisdom, that beings just becoming good for something, should instantly become nothing? Two inconsistent propositions cannot both be true. We shall not then instantly become nothing after death, if the Author of our nature be wise, good, and powerful.

All the different and opposite passions, which successively toss, distract and occupy us here, are but the several modifications of these original ones, the desire of pleasure, and aversion to pain. Ambition, avarice, envy, hatred, &c. are all reducible to these originals. All the exorbitancy of our passions arises from our mistaking the proper objects of the original one, love of pleasure, which, decried as it may have been by enthusiasts, is truly of celestial extraction. Thus we may reasonably agree with *Lucretius*, in calling this passion *dux vitæ dia Voluptas*, though we abhor his blasphemous conclusion, that it is foolish to ascribe to the Gods the efficiency of this *divine guide of life*.

PROPO-

P R O P O S I T I O N II.

THE pleasures of sense, or such as are perceived by indulging our sensual appetites, and rational pleasures, or such as are perceived in the improvement of our understanding, and the practice of virtue, are often inconsistent, contradictory, and destructive of each other.

C O N S E Q U E N C E I.

WE conceive indeed that it would be a great happiness to us, that our pleasures were all consistent, for then we should not only be percipient of a great deal more of pleasure, but also feel a great deal less of pain. But we have rendered the contrary a possibility by the abuse of our liberty, and by our folly continue to bring that possibility to be matter of fact and experience. If we pursue the pleasures of sense, by the immediate impulse of the sensual appetite, without the interference of the superior faculty of reason; we may, by obeying blindly the first precipitate, narrow-sighted principle, incur painful perceptions, from the nature of things; which we might have avoided, had we acted by a judgment resulting from a due comparison of our several perceptions: And by so acting, we may preclude ourselves from perceptions grateful to
reason,

reason, and more pleasing to sense itself, than what we were prompted by a mere sensual appetite to pursue. And though, in pursuing the pleasures of sense, we should act in consequence of reasoning, this higher faculty itself, being often unduly biassed, or undiscerning, our reasoning may be employed about the accomplishing most unreasonable purposes; and we may even this way pursue the pleasures of sense to the exclusion of rational pleasures.

2.

BUT the indulgence of sensual pleasures, may not only prevent our immediate or particular perceptions of rational pleasures, but farther it may render us utterly incapable of the enjoyment of these. It may destroy our taste of them, preclude the occasions of preparing ourselves for them, by preventing collected thought, application, study, or retirement. Thus intemperance of every sort, not only distracts and dissipates our thoughts, but often engrosses the whole percipient to that degree, as to render him incapable of perceiving any other pleasure.

3.

ON the other side, by contracting a relish for rational pleasures, we may render sensual indulgences unpleasing. By habits of reflection, and eagerness in the nobler pursuit of truth, the avocations of brutal appetite and

and luxury, as well as vicious passion, become not only insipid, but painful to us. Thus the man accustomed to a philosophic calmness, and serenity of thought, acquired by intellectual gratifications, the contemplation of truth, and the study of nature, would be importuned, uneasy, tormented in hunting about where to find the best wine, in contriving how to make a dish more palatable, or how to debauch his neighbour's daughter. Hence the pleasures, which suppose us ignorant, weak and foolish, being all in a confirmed repugnancy to rational pleasures, upon the improvement of reason, disappear: Upon our becoming wise and sober, they are no longer pleasures to us, but pains.

4.

THE pleasures of sense are only so far contradictory to reason, as they end in greater pain, or prove exclusive of greater pleasure. For since pleasure of itself is good, and the desire of it necessary to us, and the reigning passion in our nature, the only reasons there can be against pleasure of any kind are, that it ends in pain, or prevents greater pleasure. Since it must be happiness for the time it endures, happiness at least to such a degree as it is pure pleasure, there must be a reason for it. But if the pleasures of sense are inconsistent with each other, (as we often see men undergo
much

much greater sensual pain, for a trifling sensual pleasure;) they contradict reason as plainly, as when they deprive us of a higher degree of intellectual pleasure; and the true name for them, if we would denominate them by that which is most prevalent in their nature, is pains.

5.

BRUTES, having but one uniform principle of action, the gratification of sense, their sensual pleasure must be more consistent, pure and unmixed than ours. Being the highest pleasures their nature is capable of, they suffer nothing by a comparison with higher pleasures. They cannot pursue them in opposition to a higher principle in themselves. They can make no higher principle subservient to the procuring any inconsistent or destructive pleasures, as men do. They are therefore free from all pain of reflection, consequent upon this, which men are subject to. All pleasure pursued in opposition to reason is pain, but pursued in opposition to reason, with the assistance of reason itself, must be doubly pain. It may be proper here to answer an objection, which appears to have great force in the imaginations, and to mingle impertinently in almost all the arguments of the patrons of the mortality of the human soul. What reason, say they, have we to complain of our mortality, more than the brutes? If
it

it be allowed that we are miserable in our present state, are not they yet more miserable? Greater injustice then is done to them. And yet it must be granted that brutes are raised up for no other end, but to continue a succession of beings, traceless and un consequential, to appear and disappear: We ought therefore, by parity of reason, to apply to ourselves the conditions, which we think justifiable with respect to them. It is from an interested and partial claim, that we are moved to judge so unequally.—But it is replied that, these objectors forget the great and real inequality between man and brutes, which, when the rational nature is duly considered, is plainly discoverable. On the other hand, if what the objection supposes could be proved true, that two such widely differing natures were raised up for the same purpose, and to have the same end, instead of proving what is intended, that we are justly dealt with, the contrary would follow, that the greatest injustice were done us. This indeed would be such a blunder as would be a substantial ground of objection. If brutes were capable to frame the argument as we do, and to know what justice and injustice are, that is, if they were not brutes, but rational creatures, they would have reason to complain if they were to be utterly extinguished at death. But being incapable of knowing what is just or unjust, of government,

ment, law, or any rule of action, they are not properly subjects, about which justice and injustice are competent to be exercised. For sense, without a higher power, can as little constitute creatures moral or social, or make justice or injustice applicable to them, as vegetation without sense, could constitute a plant capable of pleasure or pain. When they are the causes of the greatest disasters, we do not reckon them criminal. They are capable of bodily pleasure and pain, it is true: But it will appear that the pleasure is greater, and the pain less than in mankind. Wanting the power of reflection, they are free from all the pains it occasions, which are far greater than the pleasures it affords, if there be no after-state. For to have the perceptive capacity confined to the present moment of their existence, is a greater immunity from pain, than we can well imagine, till we consider it with attention. Reflection anticipates grief, and magnifies evils in the imagination. Every act of the mind doubles misery, which brutes can feel but once. The loss of fortune, or former happiness, never troubles irrational creatures. Expectation never fills them with anxiety: They are never sunk or dispirited with disappointment of something, in which they had placed their future felicity. He is a happy man, who knows not by experience, that thinking is many times a torture not to be conceived,

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ceived, or endured. In order to form a clearer conception of this matter, let us imagine that the history of *Robinson Crusoe* was real: Especially, since the accounts of *Alexander Selkirk*, and *Peter Serrano*, from which the author probably took the hint, are real: Now let us consider within ourselves the terrors of mind, the anguish and distress, in which he, or any man must have been, in the several circumstances of his solitude, and upon the several accidents that befell him. Human nature shudders in looking upon them at a distance. The comfortless and abandoned state of a man, cast out from human society, without hope of relief or pity, shut up by the eternal barriers of the ocean, constantly agitated with real fears, or as cruel imaginary ones, a continual prey to the painful reflections upon his disconsolate condition, seems insupportable. And yet all this happened to him, because he was a rational being, endued with the power of reflection. For we may easily conceive that a brute creature in his place would have been nothing moved with these circumstances, that were intolerable to humanity. Let us consider him confined to his grot, with disease, pain, and extreme infirmity. Let us conceive the state of his mind, in that desolate condition: And let us at the same time consider the old he-goat, which, according to his narrative, he found, in much the same circumstances, lying in a dark

dark cave, in another part of the island; and it will not be difficult to us to imagine the undisturbed state of mind possessed by the brute, allowing that his pain of body had been equal, in comparison of the bitter anguish and despair, that tortured the soul of the man, in circumstances nearly the same. If it should be deemed improper, or nugatory, to frame an argument from these, yet there are numberless other instances every day before our eyes, where unexpected disappointment, the apprehension of impending danger, or the terror of approaching death, assaults a reflecting being, in a dreadfully painful manner, displaying our capacity for suffering; while irrational creatures, in circumstances nearly similar, enjoy a perfect tranquillity. When upon the sudden infliction of some cruel calamity, that admits of no consolation, or upon the irreparable loss of the most substantial comforts of life, a man loses at the same time the use of his reason, we reckon him happy upon that very account. An approach to the nature of brutes, in these cases, or the being deprived of sensibility and the power of reflection, is justly reckoned ease and relief. We often suffer more, I conceive, for irrational creatures, by a good-natured sympathy and mistake, than they are capable of suffering for themselves. This is not said with a design to excuse, or palliate any harsh and rigorous treatment of them. We

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ought to give no creature unnecessary pain: We should, even for our own sakes, refrain from this; as it is inuring the mind to an evil habit. They may indeed in general be incapable of knowing what severity or lenity is: They may have no idea of any other disposition of the human mind, or whether we abuse our power over them or not. Yet we ought rather to shew them indulgence and compassion, as the mark of our humanity; as by this means we acquire a commendable habit to be practised in our dealings one towards another. As to its being granted that brutes were made for no other end, than to continue a succession of their species, to appear and disappear; it may perhaps be true, that no solid arguments can be adduced to determine the negative: It must be observed that as few can be found to establish the position. Of this we may have the fullest assurance, that the ends of their being are not the same with those of men. We have substantial reasons to support this assertion. But we must not presume peremptorily to affirm that we know all the ends for which they were created; for we have no good reason to support that. It is no just conclusion to say: Because the immaterial part of brutes (for such they have) is not preserved after its separation from the body, for the same end and design which the Creator has in view in the preservation of the immaterial part of man, therefore

therefore it is not preserved at all. Yet this is all the reason we have for concluding so. This point, it is true, need not be controverted here, as not immediately affecting the main argument: Yet it is not amiss by the way to remark, that the contenders for the mortality of the human soul first suppose this point without proving it; and then argue from it as proved. From what has been said before, concerning the consistency and contrariety of pleasures among themselves, it must follow, that the pleasures of sense are more unmixed pleasures to brutes than to men, notwithstanding all our endeavours to heighten them, by the help of our superior faculty of reason. Their share of sensual pleasure is probably greater than man does naturally enjoy. We unskilfully seek to heighten the pleasures of sense, beyond what the natural design of them can admit. But brutes acting always regularly, and according to the call of their nature, their appetites are not weakened, nor their digestion spoiled; their strength is not wasted, nor their constitution broken; new varieties of racking disease do not arise among them from intemperance, and from hence, their health in general is not so inconstant and precarious as the health of man.

6.

THE sensitive, and the rational nature in man, are different in their pleasures, inter-

ests, and principles of government. The sensitive, which he has in common with brutes, has it's desires, appetites, and pleasures, all answered within their stated period, all antiquated and set aside in this period: the other, by which he is raised above brutes, the rational nature, is all made up of references to another period. His capacities, desires, pleasures, comprehend, or are carried deep into a following period. They are broken off, as it were, in the midst, and left unfinished, if not extended into it. His capacities conceive it; his desires are forcibly drawn towards it; his purest noblest pleasures are all referred to it; his wants require it; his happiness, even here, demands a firm belief of it; he is a loser, and complaint may reasonably be made of wrong done him, if he shall be disappointed. Thus, in a word, the rational nature, in the true conception of it, includes endless existence: And thus the lower and more ignoble, or the sensitive nature in man, alone is terminated here, the superior disappearing only, but not ending.

PROPOSITION III.

RATIONAL pleasures never contradict, or destroy each other. For if two rational pleasures were inconsistent, or mutually destroyed each other, they would mutually

render each other irrational, contrary to the supposition.

CONSEQUENCE I.

REASON is the supreme governing faculty in man, since it is a contradiction in terms, that a reasonable appeal should be made from reason. It is the highest capacity he has for pleasure; and consequently it is that principle, which should predominate in him, and give the law to all his other faculties and powers.

2.

As the desire of knowledge is insatiable or never ultimately to be answered, so the fruition of it, or the contemplation of truth, is endlessly and uninterruptedly a pleasure. For it cannot be destroyed by any other rational pleasure, nor become inconsistent with it: And there is no higher faculty in man, to controul and disprove it, as reason controuls and disproves the pleasures of sense, or, as being the supreme faculty, it ought to controul them. Thus it is secure from casualty on every hand, and can never turn into disgust and pain, like sensual pleasure, but is solid and unchangeably the same. So long as any real relations of beings to each other shall subsist, that is, indefinitely and always, so long will the knowledge of these relations be pleasant to the rational nature,

that is, without end or interruption. For the same congruity between the faculty and the object, must naturally produce the same effect, pleasure.

3.

UPON this account, the desire of knowledge, and the pleasure resulting from it, are qualified to be the desire and pleasure of endlessly-existing beings. They are always and uninterruptedly pleasant, if the indisposition of the mind or body does not obstruct our capacity to perceive them : that is, they would be endlessly pleasing to beings not liable to these indispositions. The interruption is not the fault of the object; as things enlightened might always be seen by an eye rightly disposed, and always kept open. The objects of this kind of pleasure are infinitely greater, and more in number, than of any other kind that can be named; as the knowledge of our own bodies and minds, the abstract truths in the endless progressions of science, the contemplation of every thing in nature, and of the Author of nature. And they are exceedingly more satisfying and full of delight, than the objects of any other kinds of pleasure. The natures of things are full of beauty, resulting from the knowledge, wisdom, and power that are displayed in them, and from their order, harmony, proportion, and agreement. The joy that rises in the mind, upon the
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discovering these, cannot be compared with any other kind of satisfaction. To make deductions from them, and applications of them, to the ordering our actions, as rational and dependent beings ought, is full of profit and delight. And lastly, rational pleasure has this remarkable advantage over other pleasures, that they are not the less, but rather the more delightful, the more persons there are that partake of them with us. Truth is equally pleasant to many well disposed minds as it would be to one: or rather, it is the more pleasant to that one, the more delight it affords to many. We love concurrents to help us to admire the beauty of truth. And next to the discovering truth ourselves, there is not a greater pleasure to us, as rational beings, than to help others to see it. Let us apply this touchstone to any other kinds of pleasure. Do they not betray a quite contrary nature? Are we pleased to find concurrents for the possession of wealth, power, honours, or women?

4.

It may perhaps be said that rational desires are so far from being universal among men, that few men have much desire of knowledge; and therefore it is not necessary to suppose that desires, which scarcely appear to exist, should be satisfied. It is answered, that we are not to think that the

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Author of our nature will deal with us as we do with children, take occasion from our ignorance or folly, to treat us otherwise than the law of our nature requires. It is enough that if we follow the law of our nature, we must have these desires, and that when we have them they are rational, and according to the most perfect part of our nature, and the design of the Author of it, to satisfy us that our endless existence was his design, when he gave us that nature. It cannot be said, without repugnancy, that it was his design that we should not improve our rational nature: And if we improve it, we must have these rational desires. And if we should not improve it, nor have such desires, but rather desire the contrary with intenseness; such contrary desires must be irrational, and against the law of our nature: And surely this is not enough to make an infinitely wise Being alter the eternal purpose of unerring wisdom, concerning them. Not to mention here that, if by the abuse of our freedom, we neglect to improve the rational nature, and so make it not necessary for us to have these rational desires, our existence in an after-period becomes necessary upon another account, that of his infinite justice. Besides, this objection admits, that if any man should so far observe, or improve the law of his nature, as to be under a necessity of rationally desiring endless existence, the infinitely good Author of his nature

ture is obliged to satisfy that desire, of this man at least. Would not this make the purposes of eternal wisdom dependent upon the folly, caprice, or wickedness of creatures, so that it would be in their power to determine whether they should exist endlessly or not? Absurd, and blasphemous!

5.

AGAIN, it may be said, that if we look to the general practice of mankind, and not to the nature of reason itself, it may be long enough before we come to the conclusion contained in this Proposition, that the pleasures of reason are always consistent, or never contradict each other. For the truth is, the use we see commonly made of this ruling faculty, which carries, in many respects, such evident marks of it's supremacy along with it, is to make it, for the most part, subservient only to the same purposes to which sense and instinct serve brutes; nay, too often, to make it serve, in contradiction to itself, in procuring such false pleasures to us, as are inconsistent with it, and destroy it's command and superiority over our inferior faculties.—But will any man say, it was for these purposes that reason was given us? Was this application of that noble faculty what the wise Author of nature ordained for man? The same uses in which mere sense and instinct serve brutes, they might serve as well in man; and were
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this life the whole of his existence, this higher power must appear to have been bestowed upon him in mockery. To furnish us with this glorious and comprehensive faculty for so scanty a period, a faculty which comes to us so late, and with so much toil; which prompts us to disdain sensual pleasures, as it spoils our taste of them, and raises our views and desires to something infinitely beyond or above them; this would be giving brutes a superiority over us in point of pleasure. To say that reason was given us to serve the interests of sense alone, which it teaches us to undervalue, is in the face of reason to utter a blunder, as gross as that of a rich master of a numerous family, who should cause all his children, and his menial servants, to be instructed in the learned languages, the sciences, the arts of government, of negotiation, peace and war; in every thing, in short, befitting the most exalted stations of life; and all this for no other end, than to send them out to dig in the fields, to pick flints, pull up weeds, or carry out dung. He who shall consider this matter with attention, will be convinced, that the absurdity of conduct, in the last instance, is not so glaring as that, which these degraders of the dignity of man irreverently ascribe to the wisdom of God. Will any unprejudiced man, possessed of an understanding capable of considering the point with calmness, maintain so palpable a contradiction

contradiction as this, that there is an almighty, and infinitely perfect Author of all things, especially of our rational nature, and that He has given us appetites which should never be satisfied, and faculties never to be applied to their proper use? Can it be consistent with his goodness and wisdom, that whereas every other appetite ceases when it ceases to be of use to us, the rational appetite alone should grow the more importunate, as we approach the supposed period of our existence, at which all gratification of it so soon must end? These moral attributes of God, are our certain ground of confidence, that our existence will not be finally broken off in the midst of divine purposes, thus visibly unfinished here.

6.

LASTLY, it may be said, that allowing the excellence of reason, and the supremacy of this faculty in man, no evidence can be produced from hence of our future existence, since reason is necessary to us, even upon the supposition of the soul's being annihilated at death. We could not, it seems, without it, provide for the necessities of this life, as we want those instincts, and that perfection of sense, which brutes are furnished with.—To answer only what is absolutely requisite here, since this objection will recur below: It is granted that
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reason is necessary to us in this period. Having bodies differently constituted from those of brutes, it may be supposed that man could not well subsist, without a superior faculty in the mind, to supply the defects in the body. But then, from the account of reason given above, it appears that man was constituted rational, upon a higher account. This hinders not, but it may very wisely be made to supersede likewise the use of the inferior methods of providing for the necessities of the body. Being designed to exist in an after-period, man is endued with a faculty, subservient indeed to the supply of his necessities in this, yet evidently and constantly pointing to another. To satisfy the objectors of their future existence, in their own way, man must have had reason, that being the only part of his nature, which has a necessary relation to an after-state, and have had instinct besides, in order to convince them that reason was given him upon account of his destination to a future period. But since the superior faculty, bestowed upon him for a nobler purpose, could answer both ends, the inferior became superfluous, and such a disposition might, upon that score, have been carped at, by these purblind censurers of divine Providence. This constitution would not only have been evidently unskilful, but is moreover contradictory. To have provided for the security of the body, by in-

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finct, would have been to provide for them ignorantly and irrationally. And for creatures, whose reason extends to the knowing, and directing every thing relating to pleasures and pains, (these being the chief points of it's government, as the commanding faculty,) to have acted blindly, and ignorantly, in what peculiarly concerns them, is inconsistent. It will, upon reflection, appear to be an act of the profoundest wisdom, since our duty and interest was made to consist in the improvement of our rational nature, that it should be rendered immediately necessary here, from the concern it was ordained to take for the necessities of the body: For thus we are put upon the first steps of improving it, by an original bent, and law of our nature; and are the more inexcusable if we do not proceed. Whatever there is in the nature of reason which forces us to conclude that creatures endued with it are ordained for a future state, is no less there, though reason may serve also in supplying the wants of the body, in this period, than if it did not; and we may as justly draw that conclusion from it now, as we could then. On any supposition it must appear agreeable to nature, or the appointment of the Author of it, that reason should command, and should attain that degree of improvement, of which it is capable. And we can go but a short way in this improvement, before we perceive that it is endlessly improvable;

improvable; and that the pleasure arising from hence is fitted for endless duration, and endless increase. As rational, we can no more hinder our souls from desiring this pleasure, than we can hinder our bodies from being extended. But this desire of improving our reason, and of enjoying the pleasure consequent upon it, must necessarily be a rational desire: And that a Being infinitely rational, infinitely wise and powerful, should not satisfy a rational desire of his own raising, is an express contradiction.

SECTION IV.

The Pleasures of improved Reason are less suitable to the Supposition of the Mortality of the Soul, than Pleasures that suppose the Imperfection and unimproved State of Reason.

PROPOSITION I.

UPON the supposition that after death we are nothing, or, which is the same thing, that our consciousness is then extinguished for ever, those pleasures which are grounded upon our folly, our ignorance, our weakness, nay even the delusions of an imagination vitiated by an indisposed body, or otherwise, may be equally desirable with rational pleasures.

1. The method used to prove the immortality of the soul, in the last Section, was a direct demonstration from the nature of rational pleasure, and of the infinitely rational Being, who is the Author of the soul. The consideration, urged to the same purpose in this proposition, is—that upon the supposition of it's mortality, many things confessedly unreasonable to be practised become reasonable, because consistent with the present nature and constitution of man, and

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the perfection and improvement of reason becomes irrational. It is a constant symptom of the Epicurean hypothesis, that, upon admitting it, reason contradicts, and clashes with itself.

2. At this method of arguing let no man take offence. Should any person, accustomed to account reason and rational pleasure absolutely suitable to all kinds of existence, of whatever length, here put in a caution, not to go too far in this matter, for fear of blaspheming the Author of reason; he may be reminded to apply this caution to our common adversaries, the Epicureans, whose really blasphemous absurdities this argument tends to expose. We need not be afraid to discover all the truth, nor be distrustful of our good cause. Rational pleasures cannot be equally consistent with either of two inconsistent suppositions. They cannot be the less rational, because they are incompatible with a supposition, which cancels all truth and reason. They would not be rational, if they were compatible with it. We need not be afraid to follow wherever truth shall lead us, or that any discovery it can make to us will be detrimental to our nature, or against the real interests of mankind. Can falsehood and error be ever salutary, or serviceable to the true interests of the world? Is it advisable to stop short, in the midst of our rational enquiries, against reason itself? Shall we act rationally by halves

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halves only, and so refuse ourselves the first fruits of rational pleasure, the certainty that it will be permanent? This indeed is impracticable now. The controversy has been on foot during many ages. The atheistical sophists began it. They would not suffer us to pursue this method of passive acquiescence, though it were otherwise practicable. They put men upon examining the foundations of truth and reason, by attacking them with doctrines averse from truth, reason, and nature itself: Though it has all tended, and will ever tend, to the final triumph of truth. I perfectly agree to the argument of those who say, that although there were no reason, to determine us to the side of the present inquiry, or although the reasons on both sides were equal, yet we should act according to the supposition of the immortality of the soul, and the existence of an infinitely just, and perfect Being as the Author of it; since we risque the less this way, upon condition that we are mistaken, and can lose less than the other. But this is not enough when we are inquiring what reasons there are for, and against this supposition, and whether reason itself, and rational pleasures are proper and suitable absolutely in the nature of things, to beings who cease to be again in so short a time. It is one thing to inquire what we ought to do, if we could not attain to any certainty on either side, having such a faculty as reason to direct us

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which indicates this course to us as rational: and it is another thing to inquire what propriety or impropriety there may be between a rational nature, and the supposition of its lasting but a few years. Whatever agrees to the supposition of a thing, agrees to the reality of that thing; and whatever incongruity there is in the supposition of its being shortly to be annihilated, respect being had to an infinitely wise Author of it, will let us see that such a supposition cannot be the true one.

3. If a rational being is to be extinguished utterly at death, the only use, and proper application of reason, is to be subservient to the supply of those things, for which brutes provide by the help of sense and instinct; the supply of food and raiment, and the other necessities of the individual, and the preservation of the species. This is evident, since the only proper use, and rational application of any thing, is that to which alone it can be finally referred by the agent, who acts consistently, with respect to any good it can enjoy or hope for. But all that we do, all the efforts we use, or employ reason in, without exception, are, upon this supposition, referrible to the providing for the necessities of the individual, and so keeping up a succession of the species; because it makes this be all the possible effect or consequence of our existing.—It follows, that whatever other use reason is applied to,

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that is not in some wise referrible to these ends, and terminated within this period of existence, it is precisely and strictly speaking misapplied, since reason itself can never justify its being applied to things, which have a view only to a period of existence, into which by the supposition we are never to enter, and with which we have nothing to do. If it should be said, that the things necessary to be considered and provided for in this period, naturally engage us in the contemplation of a second period, so that the joint consideration of both is necessary here, (which indeed will be shewn to be strictly true;) this is no objection against this observation, but against the hypothesis upon which it is foolishly urged. For it cannot but appear to reason a plain absurdity, that the necessities of this present life should inevitably engage us in the consideration of a future life, if that future life is not to succeed.

4. Now if it be certain that reason is applicable, and ought (even while it exercises it's natural command, and is regularly obeyed,) to be applied to things which concern a future period of existence, but are altogether disproportionate to this, as appears from the last Section, it is already manifest, that upon this supposed condition of our existence, reason contradicts itself, and pleasures declared to be absolutely rational, are yet unsuitable to our nature. Let it here

be noticed, that when we say rational pleasures are less suitable to this short period of our existence, than pleasures that imply the imperfection and unimproved state of reason, it is not meant that these baser enjoyments can make our transitory existence happy. On the contrary, I presume, before we have done with this, and the following Sections, it will appear, that we are capable of no positive pleasure upon the whole, from that quarter, and that existence were altogether hurtful and disadvantageous to man, upon the supposition that these were his only source of pleasure. But what is here meant is, that the only proper happiness we are capable of upon this supposition, is to feel our misery as little as can be, to be agreeably deceived, constantly amused with thoughtless diversions, or insignificant unpainful pursuits; any thing that may take time off our hands, and help us to get easily rid of our existence again, and that there is a greater affinity between this way of passing our time in the supposition before us, than between that supposition and rational pursuits.

5. Rational pleasures, being such as are perceived in acquiring a clear insight of the natures of things, in contemplating the truths resulting from thence, and in regulating our conduct, according to that knowledge and these truths; the following reasons will help to satisfy us that they are less suitable

suitable to beings who are so soon to be nothing, than other pleasures that do not take in so wide a compass, nor extend their relations so far. First, the more we improve our rational nature, the less reason shall we find to be satisfied with our state and condition of existence here. The knowledge, and the study itself, of the natures of things without us, and of the faculties we find within us, enlarge our capacity for pleasure, as they excite our desire of it. Yet such pleasure, upon that supposition, reason is never likely to procure us. It lets us see our wants: It strikes a feeling conviction in our breasts how empty, how transitory, how unsatisfactory are all things else, excepting that of rational pleasure itself. Thus it makes us undervalue all present objects, inflaming our desires of things that we can never enjoy: that is, it makes us condemn the pleasures falling within our existence, exciting our desires for the enjoyment of things lying beyond that period. Can a more glaring proof be given of the absurdity of this supposition? It represents us as wandering the more from the end of our being, the more we are under the government of reason. And when this is best applied, and most improved, it carries us beyond our sphere, and without our nature, into objects of contemplation, and periods of existence, with which, and where, we have nothing to do. All that we can here attain of rational

pleasure does not so much satisfy, as increase the appetite. He who knows most sees his ignorance better, and is less satisfied with his knowledge, than he who knows less. This symptom agrees perfectly with a nature that is to exist endlessly, to enjoy the object of it's desires. But it is the most unsuitable of any thing that can be named, to the nature of a being that is to cease to exist in so short a time. What is the fruit of the greatest wisdom, the ripest experience, the highest rational acquisitions, and the deepest researches into the nature of things? Is it not to lament the illusion and disappointment attendant upon all the enjoyments on this side the grave, upon all things wherein the rational nature is not gratified? Since our ignorance of what they really are, is what alone makes us put any value upon them. By improvement in reason, we constantly despise them. Who would wish to live merely that he might not be hungry, might not be cold, might not be pained? this is all they amount to; often, alas! more than all they amount to. All the movements the generality of mankind give themselves, the great transactions which exercise petty states and empires, and often overturn them, terminate in these simple views. It is not natural they should rise above them, laying aside the supposition of a second period. No man could ever boast entire satisfaction in the present scene.

Something

Something yet to come is ever the desired object that would make him happy. Now ignorance, and want of discernment of these fleeting things, would have kept us still in the dark; and made them still appear pleasant, though the appearance was but false. When we have attained this comprehensive view of rational and other pleasures, let one of these wretched sophists engage us to believe that we are soon to become nothing, how inconvenient, how deplorable a thing must the improvement of reason appear to creatures existing on such terms! Elevated above a taste for meaner pleasures, they are yet incapable of satisfying here their desire of the nobler. *Lucretius* thus obliquely hints his own notion of the matter:

*O miseras hominum mentes! O pectora cæca!
Qualibus in tenebris vitæ, quantisque periculis
Degitur hoc ævi, quodcunque est? nonne videre est
Non aliud sibi naturam latrare, nisi ut, cum
Corpore sejunctus dolor absit, mente fruatur
Jucundo sensu, curâ semota, metuque.*

Lib. ii. ver. 14.

Is not this a tacit renunciation of rational pursuits, a clandestine acknowledgment that they are pernicious?

6. The unsuitableness of rational pleasures to beings of so transitory a state of existence appears farther, if we consider that we must pass a great part of this short period, before we are fitted for them, or capable to relish them; before the heat of blood,

blood, the precipitancy of youth, the concurrence of unbridled passions and pursuits with the inconstancy of mind, and hurry of thought incident to that age, will leave us cool and collected enough to observe, and relish them: whereas we are early, and at any time, when in health and vigour, at the regular returns of appetite, fitted to relish pleasures which suppose the imperfection of reason. This single consideration will cut off one third of our existence entirely from any pretence, or possibility of enjoying these pleasures; which produces a striking impropriety, a great want of relation, between such a short existence, and such tediously attained pleasures. Why should they begin so late? Or why should we grow more passionately fond of them the nearer we draw to an end of our existence? Are these the dispositions of an infinitely wise Being?

7. What pains doth it cost us to purchase a disappointment, if this supposition is the true one? We must bestow much uneasy and toilsome application to prepare us for this pleasure, even at any time, and when the head-strong passions of youth have suffered us to settle a little. We cannot attain knowledge, which, as was shewn, is the only possible way to fit us for rational pleasure, and to act as rational beings ought, without passing a very rude apprenticeship, and undergoing much ungrateful toil, without contradicting our sense, and refusing ourselves

ourselves the opportunities of gratifying it. The man possessed of real knowledge *multa tulit fecitque puer, sudavit & alfit*. It is imbittered to us by diseases contracted in the pursuit of it. We are racked with doubts and difficulties how to separate truth from error; or where to find truth at all, among discordant parties, all arrogantly claiming a sole right in it. We have frequently our opinions to change, finding that we have been cultivating an error with the labour of many years: For truth will prevail, and molest us at last, when, upon this hypothesis, we have little or nothing to do with it. We are long led in the dark, and it is late before the propriety of this painful toil appears, or what it is good for. However, this may be very consistent, and wisely designed, if we suppose that the Beings, who undergo this troublesome discipline, are to enter into a second period of existence, to enjoy the fruit of their labour; or it may appear consistent, though we shut our eyes, and make no reflection at all upon futurity: it is, absolutely speaking, so much of a piece with the rational nature! Which perhaps is the way that the generality of mankind consider it in. But if we suppose that the Beings who are thus busy and toiling, are to be nothing, they know not how soon, it is, I think, as inconsistent as if, in a country of Cannibals, where they used to eat their enemies, they should instruct their

their prisoners in all the rude arts and traditions, they had among them, in order to be served up, in a few days, to the table. At least, when we consider what must be the disposition of things by a Being infinitely wise, we can less think it should be this, than that the most barbarous of mankind should follow such a preposterous and whimsical practice. But when at length we are got over the disgustful drudgery that lies in the entrance upon knowledge, there begins a conflict between sense and reason. Reason should command, and we are forced to own its authority: but it is with difficulty that sense obeys; and we are tempted often to take part with it, in opposition to our reason. And therefore it is that rational pleasures are much lessened to us, being pursued in opposition to the importunate calls of sense, and precontracted habits, in respect of what we may conceive them, to beings that had but one uniform nature, the rational. And the pleasures of sense, or of these precontracted habits, are also much lessened, being attended with the consciousness that they are pursued in opposition to reason, which we own should command. Man but half reasonable is a pitiful creature, susceptible of very little pleasure, being pulled contrary ways, by desires opposite and inconsistent, which cancel each other: and it is in this respect, as was marked above, that the brutes, which have
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but one uniform nature, the sensitive, have much the advantage over us, to whom the pleasures of sense are solid and intire, as far as they can be pleasures.

8. But let us suppose that a man hath so much resolution, and perseveres so long, till he gets the mastery of all his other appetites, save the rational, and sees the necessity of pursuing solid pleasure elsewhere than in the gratifications of sense, or of habits which suppose the want and imperfection of reason; which point he must necessarily come to, if he acts according to reason: disincumbered then from impediments, and ensnared with the irresistible desire of pleasure and knowledge, he sends his thoughts abroad to the consideration of Being without him; he views with admiration all the parts of nature he hath access to; he examines the origination of these things; he is surprized with the necessary extension of time and space to eternity and immensity, above all things else; he is driven back from the supposition that once there was no Being, or nothing existing, by reason of a contradiction included in the heart of that supposition, and another consequent upon it; he is forced to own the necessary existence of one Being, and but one Being, of which these (immensity and eternity) are attributes; he sees the natures of all things else were eternal in the knowledge and power of this Being, for it must

must have these perfections (knowledge and power) in an unlimited degree; he is delighted to pursue some of the eternal relations of these natures to each other; he is filled with wonder to behold the other incomprehensible perfections of this Being, manifested in the works that he hath made; to observe the number and proportion with which they are contrived; the relation and suitableness betwixt their parts; and this the more, the more skill and principles he can engage in the contemplation of them; he perceives another kind of pleasure in this, than what is to be felt in any thing else.—Or if he knows any other pleasure that may be brought in competition with it, let him name it, and thence raise an objection to this deduction. He finds it carries no sting in its consequences; he sees it would be solid and satisfying, uninterrupted and endless, to a Being, whose nature and duration were fitted and suitable to it, in its full latitude; he cannot help desiring this more than all things else, being more pleasant; and the more, the more he knows of it. After this we cannot suppose him to proceed rationally, and not turn to the examination of his own nature, to see if it be fitted for this pleasure; he reflects that it is a knowing, intelligent nature, which can view and consider these things; that it perceives pleasure in them; and therefore that there is a fitness or original proportion of

his nature to them, which must proceed from that Being, from whom the natures of things are derived; that it necessarily desires the continuance of these agreeable entertainments; that these desires must be rational, since they necessarily arise from obeying the dictates of reason; and therefore, that it is a contradiction to reason, that a Being infinitely good, and infinitely wise, should not satisfy them (*f*); and satisfy them endlessly, if as rational, his creature is under a necessity of having them endlessly. Then acting as such a nature, the rational namely, directs, we cannot suppose him not to turn all his aims to the fitting himself for, and the attainment of the endless enjoyment of these pleasures, after such a discovery; finding that he had justly despised all the pleasures that could come in competition with them; that is, all the pleasures of this present period. While, O inconsistent! he suddenly drops into the great chasm of non-existence, endless only in being nothing; and all those things he was considering of late, to which all his aims were directed under the conduct of reason, become the same thing to him, as if they were nothing, ceasing to be to him, as he to them. Thus the whole period of his exist-

(*f*) "Are such meditations and reflections as these well founded, or not? If they are, it must be reasonable to think, that God will satisfy a reasonable expectation." *Relig. of Nat. Delineated.*

ence is spent in a train of delusion, where that proves the greatest delusion, which boasted that it would vindicate him from all risque of being deluded, or imposed upon, reason; without which ensnaring faculty, he had not been liable to be thus drawn on in a chain of error and mistake. Now the argument comes to this, that either the man who hath acted thus, hath not acted rationally and wisely; or, that by acting rationally and wisely, he hath misruled his actions to the end of his being, wise and rational actions having been the sole cause of his mistaking it. The patrons of the mortality of the soul may chuse which they will say. He either acted foolishly, in obeying the dictates of reason, for he was under a rational necessity to act all along as he did; or the acting rationally misled him from the purpose and end of his being. In saying either there is a contradiction. And in saying either, what was asserted follows; for if it be foolish, on this supposition, to obey the dictates of reason, reason and rational pleasure are not proper to it. I desire to know if any man can make more of this, than that acting most rationally is acting most foolishly?

9. But what hath he lost, one may say, even although it should be so, since all the while he was agreeably amused at least? This is indeed the great sceptical question that is still put by them. But it is to be noticed,

noticed, that it is not the proper question just now, what he hath lost, or what he hath gained. That shall be considered hereafter. The thing that was enquired into was, whether rational pursuits and pleasures are proper to this supposition, and beings that are to lose their existence so soon. And putting the question here, (what hath he lost even although it should be so?) is abandoning that point, and shifting to another head, equal to saying, it is a matter of indifference whether he pursue rational pleasures or not; whether he obey reason, or disobey it; whether he believe there is an infinitely wise Being, or the contrary.

10. It is true this supposition (in No. 8.) is contradictory to itself; if the first part be true, the last must be false; and contrarily: but this proceeds from the natures of the things themselves, and only shews the more the opposition between a rational nature and an ending period. But let us suppose (if such supposition can be made) quite the contrary, that this person had found out, by as necessary a train of reason, that he was utterly to be extinguished at death. He must no less see, from that, the absurdity of employing his reason about a period he was never to enter into, or of letting his thoughts stray beyond the present. Rational acquisitions then would be no less unsuitable and ensnaring, and no less disproportionate to his views. To indulge
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thoughtfulness and rational pursuits would make him more regret the loss of being. To get unpainfully through his existence, by banishing reflection from his mind, not to think on the approaching extinction, till he felt it; and in his body not to feel hunger, not to feel cold, &c. would be all his consistent aims.

11. This, I think, is as much as can be desired, or needs to be said, to satisfy us of the unsuitableness and disproportion between rational pleasures, and the supposition of the annihilation of the soul at death: but we may farther see the little consequence to man himself, of the difference of his pleasures, if it be allowed to make a supposition or two more. Let us imagine then, that the whole of a man's existence were passed in one uninterrupted dream, where he were entertained with variety of delightful objects, pleasant incidents, curious sights, agreeable company, prosperous events; all that pleases or flatters the waking fancy, and the precontracted habits of the generality of mankind; and that he never awakened into the disappointment, and real want of all these fancied enjoyments, but slumbered on to annihilation. Would not the existence of this person be pleasanter, and more desirable, than of any of those, whose names we meet with in history? Or, know we any condition in real life comparable to this imaginary one? We could not suppose him
making

making a change with any state of life that we could imagine, but for the worse; unless we were allowed to bring in the supposition of an after-period to make up the difference. This surely lets us see how little rational pleasure, according to the reality of things, is necessary to such a short duration. Thoughtless amusements, as was said before, trifling and unpainful pursuits, and to ward off the uneasy sensations of the body, is all the consistent happiness we then are capable of. But let us farther suppose, that his dreaming degenerated, and that his sleeping transactions were chequered with good and bad, as it is in waking life, that long hopes and tedious pursuits ended in sudden disappointments, either in attaining the object, because of the unsatisfying nature of it, and that it did not answer expectation, or in the not attaining of it; till at length he became sensible, from experience, that to keep off pain was the height of all he could expect; or rather, that by his address he might moderate pain, which in some degree or other is necessary. Doth it not appear, that the shorter while his dream lasted he would be the happier (g)? If this is so, as it will appear,

(g) Mr. Addison, I think, in one of his papers, hath proposed two questions, with respect to the pleasure perceived in dreaming, which he calls problems, left to be solved by his reader. They are, "Supposing a man always happy in his dreams, and miserable in his waking thoughts, and that his life was equally divided between

appear, though perhaps it doth not yet, the question of *Lucretius*, *Quidve mali fuerit nobis non esse creatis?* may be changed a little. What happiness had it been for us never to have existed at all? Where then is the preferableness of rational pleasure on this supposition? or really what room is there for it at all? or what consequence can it have? Our whole existence is but such a dream, such a fleeting traceless vision: and if any one will say it is more real, it will only follow that it is more hurtful. What are seventy years when they are past, and the Being that existed in them totally extinguished? Seventy years of a pleasant dream would be a more eligible existence, although amused with unreal and fantastic objects. What have beings, who are so soon to be nothing, to do with truth, which is eternal? The appearance of things may serve instead of the reality to creatures that

them, whether he would be more happy or miserable?" The other, "Were a man a king in his dreams, and a beggar awake, and dreamed as consequentially, and in as continued unbroken schemes as he thinks when awake, whether he would be in reality a king or a beggar? or, rather, whether he would not be both?" *Spectator*, 489. The design, I imagine, of these questions, is to shew, that the pleasure is as real of which we are percipient in our dreams, as when we are awake: and surely, as to the reality of the pleasure, they are equal: for equally real perception of pleasure will be equally real pleasure perceived, whether asleep or awake, all things else being equal, whatever difference of reality there may be in the object.

are to endure for a little while, and disappear again for ever. If I durst say so, error, as a principle of self-government, might be equivalent to truth to beings of such a short duration as these. And it is so in life. *Cræsus* was not the better for *Solon's* lesson, nor ever would have been, unless the pile had opened his eyes; nor *Cyrus* for the example of *Cræsus*; nor *Cambyſes* for the example of *Cræsus* and *Cyrus*; nor *Smerdis* for the examples of *Cræsus*, and *Cyrus*, and *Cambyſes*; nor *Darius*, for all these. Their dream of existence is now out. All these thought happiness and pleasure consisted in the possession of riches which they could not apply to their nature, and of power to be exercised in extravagance. These wretched dreamers, whose brutal conduct, like that of other tyrants, sunk beneath humanity, though, to our foolish imagination, strangely raised above it, were all immersed in present enjoyments, without any prospect of futurity; and hence arose the impropriety and irrational tenor of their lives and characters.

12. But let us suppose that a person for his whole existence laboured under a vitiated imagination, and perceived only that kind of pleasure which supposes reason overturned, or disturbed; that, like *Horace's* *Argive*, he sat whole days in empty theatres, seeing fine company, entertained with splendid shews, and the representation of curious dramas; and that he was never re-

stored to a sound mind and misery, by finding the world as other people find it. We cannot think but that his disease would be his happiness, and that the curing him would be the plunging him into the sense of pain, hitherto unfelt; so that he would have reason to cry out—*Pol! me occidistis, amici, Non servastis.*—It is preferable certainly, as that author says in the same place (*b*), to be possessed with a pleasant madness, than to be sober and miserable. Now, what I would have observed from this is, that no pleasure is so absurd, so imaginary and unreal, as not to be a solid and eligible pleasure, and preferable to rational pleasure, if we may drop into annihilation, we know not how soon, but surely very soon; provided we can hinder the improvement and growth of reason, that it may not disprove nor destroy our imaginary happiness. And is not this a strange symptom of this hypothesis, that, in order to be happy, we should strive to keep down growing reason; that faculty that should deservedly preside over all our happiness, and direct us in the choice of all our pleasures! And yet it is so; for let a man place himself in his own mind, in the circumstances of this supposition, and he will see that nothing can be so much an enemy

(*b*) *Prætulerim scriptor delirus, inersque videri;
Dum mea delectent mala me, vel denique fallant,
Quam sapere et ringi.* Lib. ii. Epist. 2.

to his quiet, as thought and reflection, and the carrying his reason and enquiries above what the necessities of the body call for; and that nothing can secure his ease so much as the jogging blindly and heedlessly on, as it was observed above the brutes do, guided by sense and instinct only. From what misery, not to be expressed, doth the want of thought and reflection save them! Not to know misery is not to feel it, and not to feel wants is to have none. Knowledge, improved reason, and the study of the natures of things, awaken us to the sense of true wants, to which we can find no relief, but in the prospect of being something greater and more perfect in the lapse of futurity. Ignorance, I say, or insensibility of misery, is the next thing to not being miserable: want of thought and reflection performs this great point; or even reason disturbed performs it. And, as was noticed before, many of us have seen, and all of us have heard, of persons miserable to such a pitch, that their want of reason to feel it was their only happiness. Who would chuse (if he could be supposed to chuse) to enter upon existence, if nothing more can be made of it, than is to be made of it in this period! Or who would not throw himself out of it again, annihilate himself, if death is annihilation, and lay aside his Being for ever, if his views can rise no higher than to be the slave of the necessi-

ties of his body, and to keep up the succession of a miserable species! If this be shocking to common sense, let them look to it, who make the supposition, of which this is the necessary consequence. *Lucretius*, who may be allowed to have understood the genuine consequences of his own principles, insults those who are in misery, and yet live; or are so faint-hearted as to apply in their distress, to a superior power for relief (*i*). Nay, he imputes all the misery they suffer, and all the mischief they perpetrate, after that, to their cowardice, in not bravely daring to annihilate themselves; their avarice, ambition, envy, &c. to the fear of dying (*k*). The place is worth noticing. I know not if any body hath considered it particularly, or what their sentiments are, if they have; but I shall venture to offer my judgment to those, who

- (*i*) Extorres iidem patriâ, longeque fugati
 Conspectu ex hominum, fœdali crimine turpi,
 Omnibus ærumnis affecti denique vivunt :
 Et quocunque tamen miseri venere parentant ;
 Et nigras mactant pecudes ; et Manibu' divis
 Inferias mittunt : multoq; in rebus acerbis
 Acrius advertunt animos ad religionem.

Lib. iii. ver. 48,

- (*k*) Denique avarities, et honorum cæca cupido,
 Quæ miseros homines cogunt transcendere fineis
 Juris ; et interdum socios, scelerisque ministros
 Noctæis atque dies niti præstante labore
 Ad summas emergere opeis : hæc vulnera vitæ
 Non minimam partem mortis formidine aluntur.

Ibid, from ver. 59 to 87,

may

may hereafter, and to say that I think it the most consistent part of the whole philosophy, on his principles; the only particular that reconciles it, though after a very terrible manner indeed, to society, by teaching that every miserable individual should streight cut himself off from the species, and not pester the part of it yet untainted, by too eagerly clinging to existence, and preserving it by fraud and violence. This supposition of the mortality of the soul makes strange work! But I leave it to the world to consider how these consequences of it can be avoided.

13. Or let us consider this point of the difference of pleasures, with respect to all those who have gone before, who are now dead, that is, on this supposition, annihilated: Let us ask ourselves the question with respect to those whom we loved and esteemed: What importeth it now how such an one passed his existence, whether in amusing or serious pursuits, provided he passed it pleasantly, without pain and trouble? Or rather, would it not have been a folly and a loss to him, to have mistaken the end of his being, endeavouring to make of it what could not be made, and neglecting to make of it what might have been made; overlooking things that were proper to his short period, thoughtless indolence, and mirth, to deceive time, and instead of that, pining himself with anxious days, and sleepless
nights

nights, in hunting things that were above his condition? It is true, it would be the same thing to him now, whichever of the courses he had taken: but so it would too, though he had been extremely miserable through his whole duration. Yet none would, or could chuse to be miserable, though he were certain to be relieved from that misery by annihilation. And what every man would infallibly chuse, upon being apprized of the certainty of his condition, is evidently the properest for that condition.

14. What use would a man naturally make of it, who should be fully convinced of the mortality of the soul? Would he pursue knowledge; support the fatigue of application; cultivate his rational nature with care; deny himself the pleasures it did not approve of; suffer his mind to take in large views; become more inspirited with humanity and benevolence to mankind; grow a zealous assertor of justice and truth, especially such interesting truth as might benefit the latest posterity; would he act with greater caution and scrupulousness towards his neighbour; refuse gain that were not perfectly consistent with his integrity; would he assert, by generous actions, the dignity of human nature; maintain more warmly the sacred rights of society; or in any respect become a better citizen, and a more profitable member of the community?

Or

Or rather, is it not natural to suspect that he would turn more slack and indifferent on all these points, than he formerly had been? We may, I think, reasonably suppose, that his studies and inclinations would receive a new turn from the change of his philosophy; and that he would the more easily come into these maxims, *Ede, bibe, dormi—Brevis hic est fructus homullis—Sapias, vina liques—Non pietas moram afferet indomitæ morti*, and the like. An objection to this shall be noticed immediately.

15. Lastly, let us consider, that there is not so great a disproportion between one hour, or one minute, and the life of the longest lived, as between that life and many assignable periods of but finite duration. Now how absurd would it be, that a being of an hour's duration only, should have a capacity of forming views and schemes extending to a period of 70 or 80 years, or have a desire of so long an existence, and its short hour engrossed in pursuing these impossible ends! Let us consider that, on this hypothesis, what is to be after we cease to exist, cannot be more our concern, in reason, than what was before we began to exist, as *Lucretius* rightly argues (1). For a

(1) Respice item, quam nil ad nos antea cta vetustas
Temporis æterni fuerit, quam nascimur ante.
Hoc igitur speculum nobis natura futuri
Temporis exponit, post mortem denique nostram.
Lib. iii. ver. 989.

non-entity can have no concern with either. And yet that we can make the one more our concern than we do the other, shews that either our natures are extremely miscalculated to our end of existence, or that our existence is not finally to be broken off at death. If it should be said that this comes to pass by the force of our reflection, whereby we can suppose the one case our concern without a contradiction, things that are to come appearing still contingent, which we cannot do in the other, because it implies an impossibility, since the being of things past is irrevocably fixed; it is answered, that this only shews the more how very improper the power of reflection is to beings who are so soon to be nothing; since it ensnares them to interest themselves in things that are equally not their concern, if there be no hereafter, as things which it implies a contradiction should be their concern.

16. These are the considerations that make me think it plain that rational pleasures are less suitable to the supposition of the mortality of the soul, than pleasures that depend upon the want, or unimproved state of reason. Against these, and the consequence drawn from them, not a few objections will be moved. The reason of which is, that we think, because rational pleasures are so extremely suitable to the nature of man, when improved, on the contrary supposition of an after-state; or
really,

really, without making any supposition at all, and absolutely speaking, therefore they must be suitable to all suppositions alike. Though nothing is so suitable to another, but a supposition may be made, on which it shall be unsuitable to it. The suitability of rational pleasures to a rational nature cannot be denied; it is imported in the very terms; and a rational nature implies a duration of existence proportionate to it; but the suitability of rational pleasures to a rational nature, taking in the joint consideration that it is soon utterly to be extinguished, is the thing that is denied. Those who have any scruples, will have their attention excited to go through their objections; to see if any thing to be said can take them off. And those who have none, will perhaps pass by what follows.

17. First then, against what was just now said, it will be urged, that a good man, although he were fully convinced of the mortality of the soul, would nevertheless act virtuously, and according to the improvement of his rational nature. Answer: This I shall not deny; I rather think it is so; and shall farther add, that a truly good man would prefer the pain necessarily to be incurred from acting virtuously; which certainly would be to be reckoned to the score of pleasure, if joined to a consciousness that there is an infinitely good and just Being, who takes care of the affairs of the world;

world; would prefer, I say, such pain, to the pleasures of vice: for the having improved his rational nature to this pitch, would have destroyed his taste for these. But this supposes him to have acquired such perfection of virtue before hand. The things to be considered here are, if the generality of mankind would do so; if even the best of men would improve their rational nature to such a height, and fit themselves thus for rational pleasures, if they were fully convinced of the mortality of the soul, in the beginning of their applications, and at their setting out. Would the principle, that virtue is its own reward, have sufficient charms for those that must yet be supposed unacquainted with the pleasures of it, and be of force enough to keep the unruly passions of men within bounds? I shall take the liberty to observe, that however specious this notion may be in appearance, yet when considered to the bottom, it will be found to suppose the want and absence of an infinitely good and just Being in the universe. For to say this constantly holds good upon earth, is a palpable contradiction to common sense, and the observation of all thinking men. Besides, it is to be remembered, that virtue, on atheistical principles, is but a name, a thing of man's invention. Any principle that supposes the absence of an infinitely just Being, strikes at the root of virtue, truth, reason; denies all the beauty
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and consistency in their nature. From the certainty of the existence of this Being alone, their nature can be consistently deduced. It is true, we sometimes find the Atheist, like other men, speaking of virtue and vice, and seeming to allow common principles with the rest of the world, as *Lucretius* in the passage last cited: But this is only the stale artifice of *verbis ponere, re tollere*; to serve a turn, which he may again retract, to serve a contrary turn; as all the practical Atheists do, who carry the speculative principles their full length, to defend their actions. Therefore it is that they are to be kept to the just consequences of their own principles, in all their deformity and want of nature, and not allowed to shift them, when it makes for their purpose. It is considering the thing in this view, that can only make the subject of this present Section pertinent, and a good deal of that which is to follow. I cannot be supposed to argue against rational pleasure absolutely, when I argue against the agreeableness of it to the Atheistical scheme: nor that a rule of action inconsistent with the welfare of the world is the true rule; though I shew such rule would take place on his supposition. Moreover, though a truly good man would act virtuously, and according to the dictates of improved reason, on any supposition; yet we cannot think that any other thing, that can be named,
would

would mortify and grieve him so much, as to be fully convinced that the soul perisheth for ever with the body: this is the loss of all to him; and the best men are under a necessity of desiring pleasure. Now this cannot be but a bad sign of this hypothesis, that a good man is under a necessity to grieve upon it; precisely because he is good, and acts virtuously: for if the contrary of this is supposed, he will have no reason to grieve, but rather to rejoice. And that a good man should have just reason to grieve, or a bad man to rejoice, can only be consistent with the absence of a just and good Being in the universe. It is impossible, on other terms, that a good man should suffer pain for being good, or a bad man rejoice for being bad. Lastly, though all the men in the world were thus good, so as to pursue the gratifications of the rational nature, although fully convinced of the mortality of the soul, this doth not make the nature of rational pleasure, and of this supposition, a whit more consistent and suitable to each other: matters of fact cannot change the natures of things, of which they are the result, nor weaken the arguments drawn from them. This could only shew that men would pursue rational pleasures, because of the congruity between them and their nature, in spite of that incongruity that was between them, and the certainty of the soul's perishing at death.

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18. From what was said in the end of No. 15, an objection may again be urged which was in part considered before, viz. that the power of reflection and reason is necessary to us upon other accounts than the acquisition of speculative knowledge, and the pursuit of these rational pleasures, as they are called; that the providing for the necessary things of this period only seems the chief end and design of the rational faculty; and that only curious and inquisitive heads have diverted it to these dark and distant prospects. But not to repeat what was answered before, on this head, it is here farther added, that, as reason is confessedly necessary for our provision, and government too, in the present period; so it is subjoined, that the faculty, by which we were barely to provide for the necessities of the present period, ought not to have been applicable to the consideration of a future period, but be restrained to the pleasures that would constitute perishable creatures happy. It ought not to have been such, as should enable them to form ideas of that pleasure here, and raise their desires to it hereafter; if we suppose the Author of the human nature a good and wise Being, and that such second period was not to follow. The reason of this is plain: for this is to suppose him to lay a snare before his creatures, to make them mistake the end of their existence, and to wander the farther from it, the more they acted according to

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the most perfect part of their nature, to necessitate them, if they acted rationally, to discover the unsatisfactoriness of all things falling within their appointed existence, and to refer all their solid pleasures, and fix all their hopes, on a second period which he did not design should succeed. We should be in the wrong not to notice the irreconcilable opposition, the fixed repugnancy, between these two. It seems a conclusive proof, if not a full demonstration, that a rational being, purely as such, is to exist endlessly; or, taken the other way, that a being of the present period only, should not have been rational at all; since it is certain, that the Author of the human nature is good and wise, in an infinite degree. If this be fair reasoning, as I can conceive it is, we have as little ground to doubt that we shall be living, conscious, and intelligent beings after death, and for ever, as to doubt that the truth of a mathematical demonstration will hold good, when it is tried by an experiment. However, let the world search and examine if it be so, or otherwise. But it is farther to be observed here, that the very things in this life, necessary both to the individuals of mankind, and to the whole species, cannot be provided for, without necessarily engaging us in the consideration of a future period. If this be so, and yet no second period shall follow, it is an unaccount-

unaccountable blunder, and cannot be the work of infinite wisdom.

19. Now that it is so we may be satisfied; by considering how necessarily the making of laws, the distribution of justice, and the maintaining of government, and society, lead us to the consideration of a Supreme Being, of an after-state, and of the immortality of the soul. For human pacts and agreements in the regulation of society, and the making of laws, either suppose that there is something sacred and inviolable in the nature of faith, truth, and justice; or else they mean nothing but a mutual consent to a cessation of injuries, till some one gathers force, or invents fraud, to break through them securely. If they suppose the sacred and inviolable nature of faith and justice, these must owe what is sacred in their nature to a Being sovereignly just, and faithful; for, as hath often been said, on the contrary supposition, they are but empty sound; there being nothing, from which their nature can be consistently deduced. And that the violation of these perfections hath often no consequence in this life, must inevitably carry us to the enquiry about the certainty of the existence of this Being, and of a future period, when the suitable consequence may obtain; which brings us to the consideration, whether we shall be then something or nothing. But let us suppose that human pacts, and laws have nothing sacred in them;

and that faith, truth, and justice are but empty breath, insignificant sounds: yet when we see the world turned upside down by force and fraud, we must see how absolutely necessary it would be to the welfare of it, that there were an infinitely just and powerful Being, to take notice of the affairs of mankind, and that a final rectification of all disorders had been designed, and should follow. Upon this supposition, is not reason competent to rectify the very constitution of the world? Absurd and presumptuous! we must see the necessity of this, wish that it were so, and lament that it is not so. And thus, even upon this supposition, we are necessarily driven on the consideration of a future period, by the necessities of the present. And our reason, even in securing the conveniencies of food and raiment, appears applicable to far distant things. That we provide for these by reason, and not by instinct, subjects us to all the condition and laws of moral beings. Our very food and raiment (let it be noticed) are thus connected to the contemplation of the immortality of the soul. Let us consider but one practice in the affairs of mankind, universally observed among all nations, and necessary to be so, that engages us in this consideration; a judicial oath. The necessity of this, wherever the deciding controverted facts depends on testimony, and therefore the universality of it, cannot be contested.

tested. This practice is founded on the natural difference, or opposition, that there is between perjury, and swearing to a truth (*m*); and this difference hath a manifest reference to a diversity of consequence these two opposite actions were to have. For if no such difference, and diversity of consequence had been supposed by men, the practice had been without a foundation in nature. And this diversity of consequence was expected from a superintending power, according to the opposite nature of the two actions. For such an oath itself decides the affair finally among men here. Thus we see this practice is an immediate appeal to an over-ruling Being, and is necessary in the affairs of the world. And though we should say that they who first introduced this practice, supposed that the punishment due to perjury was to happen in this life: yet still it is an immediate appeal to this Being; and if the punishment did not happen here, this must occasion a farther enquiry, and in any event bring on the consideration of a future period (*n*). The Atheist himself cannot deny that there is a difference in nature between truth and falsehood, between swearing to the

(*m*) Nullane perjuri capitis, fraudisque nefandæ
Pœna erit? ——— *Juv. Sat.* 13.

(*n*) Αλλ', ὦ ἄνδρες, τὴς μὲν διδάσκοντας τὴς μάρτυρας,
ὡς χρὴ, ἐπιπορεύονται καταψευδομαρτυρεῖν ἐμοῦ, καὶ τὴς
πιθομένους τούτοις, ἀνάγκη ἐστὶ πολλὴν ἑαυτοῖς σφαιδεῖναι
ἀσέβειαν καὶ ἀδικίαν. Xenophon. Apolog. Socratis.

one and the other, unless he would be so absurd as to say, there is no difference in nature between things of opposite and contrary natures. He rather becomes Atheist from observing this difference, because the respective consequence doth not follow according to his mind, and at his time. This was the very first rise of Atheism. Where, by the way, we may observe the slippery foundation it is built upon. It comes just to this. What hath not been cannot be; therefore there is no God. This is as if one should say, what I assert is truth, though it is built upon a thing that is uncertain. Strangely inconsistent! The Atheist allows the nature of truth, justice, reason; otherwise he must talk like a mad man; and yet he denies the existence of that Being, without which these things could have no nature, as was shewn in the first Section. But to return, let us suppose, with the Atheist, that man sprung originally out of the ground, and let us ask then, how came the notions of a future state, of religion, and a supreme governing power to be broached. This will bring the case full home. For if it was necessary on such a supposition, it cannot be unnecessary on any other that can be made: And let us take *Lucretius's* own answer to it. He says, it was the seeing the motions of the heavenly bodies, and the returning seasons of the year, together with men's fear, weakness, and ignorance of the
true

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true causes of things (o). Now since these causes are constant and necessary, the appearances over our heads are the same, and our own fear and weakness as great as ever,

(o) Præterea, cœli rationes ordine certo,
Et varia annorum cernebant tempora verti;
Nec poterant quibus id fieret cognoscere causis:
Ergo perfugium sibi habebant omnia Divis
Tradere, et illorum nutu facere omnia flecti——
Nam cum suspicimus magni cœlestia mundi
Templa super, stellisq; micantibus æthera fixam,
Et venit in mentem solis, lunæq; viarum;
Tunc aliis oppressa malis in pectore cura
Illa quoq; expergefactum caput erigere inquit,
Ecquæ sorte Deum nobis immensa potestas
Sit, vario motu quæ candida sidera verset.
Tentat enim dubiam mentem rationis egestas,
Ecquænam fuerit mundi genitalis origo——
Præterea, cui non animus formidine Divum
Contrahitur? cui non conrepunt membra pavore,
Fulminis horribili cum plagâ torrida tellus
Contremittit?—— Lib. v. ver. 1182, et seq.
Quippe ita formido mortaleis continet omnes,
Quod multa in terris fieri, cœloq; tuentur,
Quorum operum causas nullâ ratione videre
Possunt, ac fieri divino numine rentur.

Lib. i. ver. 152.

Cætera, quæ fieri in terris, cœloq; tuentur
Mortales, pavidis cum pendent mentibus sæpe,
Efficiunt animos humiles formidine Divum,
Depressosq; premunt ad terram; propterea quod
Ignorantia causarum conferre Deorum
Cogit ad imperium res, & concedere regnum.

Lib. vi. ver. 49.

From these citations let the philosophy of the Atheist be noticed. Because human reason cannot fathom the deep contrivance of things, he infers they were contrived by no reason. He upbraids the rest of men for standing in awe of omnipotence, and trembles himself at chance; addresses all his prayers and wishes to it.

and if we have more knowledge, that discovers nothing advantageous to the Atheist's side, since, I say, even this supposition shews to satisfaction, how necessarily men are driven upon these notions, and that it is impossible to separate the circumstances of mankind, in the present period, from the consideration of a future one. Which was the necessity to be shewn here. This appears beautiful, and well contrived, if we were designed for this future period: but so utterly inconsistent with wisdom and goodness, if we were not, that it makes us strike out against the notion of a God, that could have so miscalculated the natures of things, and it affords us another plain proof of the immortality of the soul. It is a wilful misnaming and perverting things in the objection, when the knowledge spoken of before, from the acquisition of which rational pleasure is perceived, is called speculative knowledge: it is as practical as knowledge can be, since it influences, or should influence, all our practice, as rational and knowing Beings. And it is the mistaking from which of the suppositions objections ought to be made, when it is said, that to provide for the necessity of the present period seems to be the chief end and design of the rational faculty. They who will make this objection should allow of no final end, or design proposed. In *Epicurus's* notion, the hand was designed for no end at all,

all, but after it was hit upon by chance, men found out that it might be useful; against which *Galen* reasons so well. The end of any thing, on this supposition, is that to which it can be consistently applied. And the absurdity taken notice of here is, that then reason could only be consistently applied to the things of this period; and yet we are necessitated to apply it to the consideration of a future.

20. It will possibly be farther objected, that notwithstanding this hypothesis of the soul's perishing with the body, men may indulge rational pleasures, as much as any other kind of pleasure; that this supposition doth not alter the nature of them, they are still what they were before, or are upon any other supposition, as pleasant and satisfying; and that therefore they may serve at least to make so much of our short existence pass away easily to us: and accordingly, men who did not believe the immortality of the soul, have nevertheless made great progress in philosophy, and the enquiry into nature. But it is answered, that this is a wretched defence for rational pleasures, and equal to giving up the cause. For though they were still upon an equal footing with other pleasures, and as much to be pursued; is not that a great absurdity, that rational pleasures are but on a level with other pleasures that are not rational! The hypothesis that infers this cannot be a rational

rational one. Herein lies the blunder, that those, who pursue not rational pleasures, cannot be condemned in reason for not pursuing them; and they who pursue pleasures that are not rational cannot be condemned in reason for pursuing them; which is an express contradiction in terms, and by it's absurdity, a fresh confirmation of the truth. —Is there any other truth whatsoever, save that of the existence of an infinitely powerful and perfect Being, which is manifested so many different ways, as that of the immortality of the soul?—This apology for rational pleasures brings them in for amusements only, with the veriest trifles, with dreams, madness, &c. to help us to get rid of so much of our existence: but they are too solid and serious for this superficial purpose. Reason will examine what it doth, and the grounds on which it doth it, and the end for which it labours: and to suppose it not to do this, is to suppose it to proceed not as reason. A rational enquirer into the nature of things, will enquire equally into his own nature, with the natures of other things; that is one of the chief things, whose nature is to be enquired into: and he will suit the rest of his enquiries to his own nature (*p*); and if he neg-

(*p*) Τάτων αἰὲν δεῖ μεμνηῖσθαι, τίς ἡ τῶν ὅλων φύσις, καὶ τίς ἡ ἑαυτοῦ, καὶ πᾶς αὐτῇ πρὸς ἑαυτὴν ἔχουσα καὶ ὁποῖον τε μέρος, ὅπου καὶ τῶν ὅλων ἔστι, καὶ ὅτι ἑδραῖος δὲ καλῶνται ἀκόλουθα τῇ φύσει, ὡς μέρος εἶ, προλαβεῖν τε αἰὲν καὶ λέγειν. Mare. Antonin. eorumque ad seipsum. Lib. ii. cap. 9.

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lects this, he proceeds with precipitancy and folly, for all that he doth otherwise may want to be undone again. And if he doth this, it appears by what is said above, that he will find his nature and this supposition unsuitable to one another. Rational pleasure is indeed very satisfying, and the only pleasure that can make our existence pass easily to us, after we have improved our rational nature : but it is to be minded, that it is the nature of it, always to join present pleasure with the prospect of future, and to connect the two periods of our existence. This is an ill quality of it to help us to pass time, on this supposition. The man who is under sentence of death, counts the time with terror on his mind, and wishes every hour were a year ; so here we would rather wish that time would not pass. Besides, it is to be remembered, that rational pleasures are inconsistent with other pleasures, disprove them to be pleasures, destroy our taste for them, and therefore are not fit to come in for a share of our amusements with them. The method here proposed seems not to regard the acting rationally, but to separate rational practice from rational pleasure, very unskilfully and against nature. We must say, if we speak consistently, and I desire it may be noticed, that there is every where a rational pleasure in obeying the dictates of reason ; and this by the very terms. If rational pleasure is
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necessarily annexed, in the nature of things, to the obeying the dictates of reason, as it is from the eternal congruity between such a nature and such action, it must be every where, or no where. Nothing can be more pleasing to a rational mind than to act the part of a rational being, the part designed it by infinite wisdom, to keep up to the dignity of our station in the rank of beings. There is a natural beauty, harmony, or proportion, in actions, as much as in abstract ideas and contemplations (for the natures of actions were first in idea) which to violate, is as gross as if we should join ideas totally irrelative in demonstrating an abstract truth. Iniquity is justly said to be the very same in action, as falsity, or contradiction, in theory: and the same cause that makes the one absurd, makes the other unreasonable. And I shall farther add, that the pleasure resulting from acting according to the dictates of reason, is not the less, though the action is attended with hazard and difficulty. There is not a more sovereign pleasure to the virtuous mind, than to relieve the innocent, when oppressed by lawless force, or to rescue a man out of undeserved misery, though it be done with trouble and danger. This shews the commanding nature of reason, and rational pleasure; we chuse the pains of sense, sometimes with passion, because of the superior rational pleasure that attends them. This beautiful disposition

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disposition of things, and this subordination of pleasures, is very inexplicable on the atheistical principles. But after all, this method is rather a tacit defence of the motive of the generality of those, who enquire into the nature of things, and pursue either vain-glory, and the reputation of being profoundly learned, or propose only the satisfying their curiosity. But none of these, without a farther, more solid view, will denominate the enquiry rational. The man who proposes to acquire knowledge, without resolving to act according to it, or he who acts contrary to knowledge acquired, proposes, and acts more irrationally, than any person else that can be named; than he who acquires no knowledge, and acts by the law of sense, as brutes do. For he proposes to act, or acts, in opposition to known reason. It is true, this hypothesis doth not alter the nature of rational pleasure; the nature of that, and of every thing else, is above such a casualty; it is as pleasant after, as before this supposition is made: but then the nature of rational pleasure, and of this hypothesis, are intirely opposite; that is to say, it is not a rational hypothesis. As to what is said, that those who have denied the immortality of the soul, have yet made great progress in reason and philosophy; I answer, that from their writings we may with certainty conclude they have not. Among those few, at least, of whom this mighty
boast

boast is made, not any one ever produced a work of that stamp, which, upon examination, has not proved full of gross and palpable absurdities. All the sound learning, and true knowledge, which have challenged the applause and regard of succeeding ages, have ever been on the side of their adversaries.

21. It may be farther said, that the sages, and philosophers of antiquity, pursued all the pleasure that is to be perceived in acquiring knowledge, and acting conformably to that knowledge, without any faith in a future life and immortality, which were only brought to light by the gospel: Even so we may improve our reason, and act according to the dictates of it, thus improved, without knowing or considering whether we shall exist or not, after death, or whether we shall enjoy these pleasures a long or a short time. To this be it answered; first, (allowing the fact to be true, in it's full latitude;) It is quite another thing to improve reason, and obey it's dictates absolutely, and without forming any determined opinion about the mortality or immortality of the soul, and to pursue rational pleasure upon the supposition of the Atheist. Let this be carefully noticed, or the whole strain of my present argument is liable to be grossly mistaken. Rational pleasures are so unexceptionable, and reason so superior in it's nature, that it cannot be supposed unsuitable

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to man, till this wretched hypothesis is made, that we are to be nothing, we know not how soon. It is upon this hypothesis alone, (which, by the blessing of God, reason, as well as revelation, effectually confutes,) that they appear incongruous to the end of our being. It is not said, it cannot be said, that the great men of antiquity pursued rational pleasure, upon the supposition of their final extinction at death. Yet were this true of some of these pretended sages, this would not shew the suitableness of rational pleasure to the nature of man upon that supposition. The incongruity of it has before been proved. It still remains as it was; this instance notwithstanding. But is this instance, after all, founded in truth? Did not the wisest men in former ages universally acknowledge the superintendence of divine wisdom and power, and the immortality of the soul (q)? Atheism, and the doctrine that all was blind matter, was but a novel opinion, in respect of that

(q) "Anaximandre vivoit alors, [about the fiftieth olympiad, six hundred years before the christian era.] Il fut le premier, qui voulut bannir de l'univers le sentiment d'une intelligence souveraine, pour reduire tout a l'action d'une matiere aveugle, qui prend necessairement toutes sortes de formes. Il fut suivi par Leucippe, Democrite, Epicure, Straton, Lucrece, and toute l'ecole des Atomistes: Pythagore, Anaxagore, Socrate, Platon, Aristote, & tous les grands hommes de la Grece se souleverent contre cette doctrine impie, & tacherent de retablir l'ancienne Theologie des Orientaux." *Ramsay's Discourse on Mythology.*

which

which owned a supreme governing mind, and a future existence. *Lucretius*, (though not in strict truth) celebrates *Epicurus*, as the first who reared his head against the gods, and braved their thunder; the first, who subdued religion, and shewed that souls, being material, were dissipated, with their bodies. The natural fears, weaknesses, and wants of men, together with all the striking phenomena in the material universe, necessarily impressed upon the minds of men these salutary truths from the very first, and still enforce the consideration of them, except where the vanity or frenzy of scepticism labours to extinguish the sacred light of nature.

22. There yet remains an objection to be removed, of greater weight than any of the former. It will be said, that the improvement of the rational nature is, no doubt, as painful and troublesome a thing, as it is here represented; that it requires much time and intense application, and therefore few only of mankind can arrive at knowledge, and rational pleasure; since the necessities and conveniencies of life take up the hands and heads of far the greatest part of the human species. And hence it is concluded, that the improvement of reason is not intended for man by nature, and consequently all the reasoning drawn from it falls to the ground.—It is replied, that reason, or intelligence, is nevertheless confessedly our commanding

commanding faculty, the most perfect part of our nature; and it is equally certain, that if we neglect to improve it, when it lies in our power, we act against reason, and degrade our nature. But if at any time we are under a real necessity of not improving our rational nature, necessity becomes the strongest reason; and we are free from blame. The time that we must bestow on sleep, on the wants of the body, and in making provision for the necessities of life, is justly and rationally laid out upon these things. All men are, more or less, under these necessities. Yet that will not justify us, if we pretend more time is necessary to them, than is really so; or if we bring ourselves under habits, and contract an adventitious necessity of laying out all, or most of our time, this way. No condition of life is so low, where all our time is necessarily taken up with these things, so that men may not improve their minds with such knowledge, as readily instructs them to act as rational, moral, and dependent creatures ought. It is indeed manifest, that the more knowledge and truth a man can attain to, in contemplating the works of nature, the more beauty and perfection he will be enabled to discover, the more he must love, and reverence the all-gracious Author of the universe, and the more he must advance his own happiness and perfection. But at the same time, there is enough discovered, on

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the outside of the creation, to instruct even a superficial beholder, one that is barely rational, and to convince him of the goodness, wisdom, and power of the Creator; and to exhibit obviously to his view the general line of his duty, as a dependent creature. It is wisely ordained, that the most knowing and industrious can never be without a boundless prospect of farther instruction, and the most ignorant cannot want what is necessary, but by their own fault. The following observations, for instance, are obvious to every understanding, in a state of the least imaginable improvement: —When, at night, the earth is covered with darkness, what security have we, that we shall be ever again relieved out of that disconsolate condition, or that the cheerful sun shall once more dawn upon us? What must become of us wretched inhabitants of this globe, if left in that situation? Is this less a mercy, or less an instance of wisdom and power, because it is renewed to us every day? Is not every man capable of feeling this mercy, this deliverance; and of knowing that he could not procure it to himself, who is sensible of the misery we should be in, without it were thus daily conferred on us. Again, the rudest rustic, when he contemplates the earth covered with snow, with no green thing, or appearance of vegetable life upon it, is driven to ask himself, how long could man or
beast

beast abide upon earth, if it continued so? Who can change the disposition of the air, or loose the fetters, that bind the glebe, and lock up the water-springs, or make the sun climb higher up in the heavens? When he sows the seed in the ground, a reflection will naturally force itself into his mind; what would become of him if it did not rise again, and after such a wonderful manner, and with such increase? His hope, that it will do so, is not unchecked with fear. The most ignorant is convinced that many things may happen to disappoint it. By numberless means does infinite wisdom awaken the attention of the most unthinking mortals, to behold, and confess that the elements, and all nature, are in his hand. Man's utter ignorance of the great, the supreme object of knowledge, is thus rendered in a manner an impossible thing. All things contribute to *turn his mind from vanity unto the living God, who made heaven and earth, and all things therein; who, however he may suffer all nations to walk in their own ways, hath not left himself without witness, in that he doth good, and giveth us rain from heaven, and fruitful seasons, filling our hearts with food and gladness* (r). At certain times, the unlettered hind will apprehend he sees the punishment of his misdeeds, of his forgetfulness of God, is pursuing

(r) Acts xiv. 15, 17.

him swiftly. Disorders in the face of nature appear to spoil its beauty. Distempers and contagion seize his herds and flocks. An ungenial season turns his fruitful fields into a barren wilderness. *The land mourneth, the corn is perished, and joy is withered away from the sons of men* (s). Yet how soon, and often how instantly, does kind heaven send him relief, and refreshment! And can he receive the bounty of heaven, without an instructive lesson? Sensible of the deliverance, thankful for the mercy, can he fail to attend to these plainest, and most ordinary instances of power, wisdom, goodness? Can he refrain from admiration and praise? Nothing but absolute stupidity, an utter want of reflection, can prevent the mind of man from attending in some degree to these changes, and receiving some light in his understanding from them. The Author of our nature has regarded our condition, in all possible circumstances. He has instituted order, beauty, harmony, in the material world, thus impressing upon our minds a sense of his wisdom, power, and goodness. Yet, without disturbing his established laws, he sometimes strikes conviction of his superintending providence upon our hearts, by alarming and terrible acts of government. These obvious parts of knowledge necessa-

(s) Joel.

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rily affect and influence us, more or less; as dependent creatures, who expect all things from another hand. And a mind, once awakened by these informations, cannot rationally cease, till it acquires some other parts of knowledge, which follow naturally from these. There is not such a dearth of obvious and familiar principles, common to all men, as some people, too hastily assert. Very many among those, they call the lowest of mankind, might shame these their arrogant censurers, who might find them perhaps, upon strict inquiry, less deficient and blameable than themselves, in this matter. A little knowledge may serve to direct them more regularly and honestly, to a conviction and love of interesting truth, than these their conceited, and often despicable superiors. The high stations in life especially, are subject to great inconveniences in this respect. Vain-glory, presumption, the unprincipled pursuit of schemes of ambition, interest, pleasure, unsettle and often obliterate the best, or most truly valuable parts of knowledge, in the minds of the little wretches, whom we commonly call great men.

23. What is advanced above may be some ground of consolation to those, who really wish to improve their rational nature, but complain that they are prevented, by necessary avocations, or insuperable difficulties. In the mean while, they must wait with pa-

tience. The time will certainly come. No truth is built on firmer evidence than this: that our rational appetites were given us for some good end, and will therefore certainly be satisfied. How small a start have twenty or thirty years proceeded in an endless duration. He who dies latest, says *Lucretius*, has nevertheless an eternity of non-existence before him.

*Nec prorsus, vitam ducendo, demimus hilum
Tempore de mortis. (t)*

How bright is the prospect of consolation afforded by the opposite system! Till the blessed time shall come, when *the day-spring from on high shall visit them*, let them reflect, that though they have improved their understanding but a little, either through want of opportunity, or of some necessary helps, or for any other assignable impediment; yet if they act according to the real improvement they have made, they are sure they so far act wisely, and consistently, and that their actions are directed the same way, and tend to the same happy event, as if they had made farther discoveries. Just as he, who has only learned the elementary part of a science, is sure not to be mistaken in his arguments, and application, if he keeps strictly to what he has learned, and has certainty about. The reason is plain. Truth is always consistent with itself, and the

(t) Lib. iii. ver. 1100.

greatest advancement never contradicts the beginning of it. Hence it is that a little sound knowledge is enough to direct the practice of the gross of mankind, in the same way that they would pursue, in regard to the same objects, if they had made greater acquisitions. But it is nevertheless true that they are in the wrong, if they stop here, having farther opportunity to improve the rational nature: Since the farther they go, the more they must discover of the excellencies of the infinitely wise God, of the inexhaustible source of happiness and perfection, and of their own power of approaching to him, nearer and nearer, though ever at an infinite distance.——In short, notwithstanding these objections, or any other, which can be proposed, the whole argument appears reducible to this easy dilemma. Either our Creator designs to satisfy our rational appetites, or he does not: If not, he would not have made us rational at all: If he does design to satisfy them, either the desire of endless rational pleasure is irrational, though proved to be necessary to our nature, or we are to exist endlessly, if a good and wise Being ordained and constituted our rational nature. This is without appeal.

24. Be it always remembered, that it is by no means asserted here, that reason is not necessary, and a great blessing to us, in the present period. It is only maintained, that reason is strongly relative of a future state;

and that we are liable to gross deception, by being put under the direction of a faculty, so related, unless that state shall succeed to the present: Because this faculty engages us unavoidably, if we pursue it's dictates, to enter into a train of thought and action, applied to ends, whose accomplishment lies within that future period, when the pain and drudgery to be now undergone is to meet it's profit and reward. We are not here inquiring what is necessary to our present nature and constitution, but what that nature and constitution must have been, if we had been designed, by our wise Creator, for this short stage of existence only. It is asserted that, in that case, our governing faculty should have been such as to be applicable only to the things of this period, and not such a power, as impelled us perpetually to wander from the end of our being, carrying us beyond our sphere, into objects of contemplation, and periods of existence, with which, and where we had nothing to do. Instinct and sense, confined and confining principles of action, might then have directed our actions, without foreign help, for a longer space than is our existence here; since many irrational creatures are longer lived than man. His pleasures had then been purer and more solid than now they are, when reason disapproves and controuls them. He had not known irrational or immoderate pleasures of sense, which are the

the source of continual pains to him now, no less than those of debased and corrupted reason. This supposition then of the fleeting nature of man, thus strangely misfitted to his governing faculty, blasphemously arraigns that of his Creator, as impotent, ignorant, or malicious. And once more it appears, per contra, that the assertion of our endless existence stands upon the same footing as the certainty of the power, wisdom and goodness of the necessarily existing Being.

P R O P O S I T I O N II.

The Desire of Existence is as necessary to a rational Being, as the Desire of Happiness.

1. WE cannot but desire that happiness, of which we have any knowledge, or conception. And since happiness is but the mode of existence of a percipient creature, our desire of existence, without which it is impossible, or contradictory to reason, that happiness should subsist, must of course be necessary, and equally strong with our desire of happiness: And a desire of existence is thus manifestly inseparable from a rational nature.

2. We may hence infer, that if at any time it should appear to be the interest of a rational being not to exist, or if, in any circumstances, it should desire not to exist,
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it would then affect what is against the rational nature, or absolutely contradictory to it. It is impossible this shocking phenomenon should be ever produced, unless by having engaged the rational nature in a course of conduct ruinous to it's own interests, or destructive of itself. In this consists the deformity of vice, it's opposition to the supreme rectitude, and it's incurring the displeasure of God. For thus it is, that vice counteracts the effect of the benevolent and wise First Cause. There is, it seems, in the nature of things, a possibility that rational beings may abuse the blessings of heaven, may pervert their reason to that degree, that, respect being had to necessary and eternal justice, their only consistent happiness, (improperly so apprehended, being a mere absence of misery) would be non-existence: Or it becomes their only object of desire, considering their offence, and the dreaded consequences of their offence against this necessary principle of justice, which, they are sensible, not all their endeavours can eliminate out of nature and being.

3. Since then, as rational, we cannot but desire existence, and since this impossibility is equal at all times of our existence; or in other words, since we cannot but desire endless existence, it here appears evidently how much a rational nature is misfitted to a limited existence, or to beings of the present scanty period only. This inconsistency must frequently

frequently recur upon us, as we view the subject in this, and several other lights. Upon the supposition that death will terminate our being, the condition of existence to a rational nature is this: it is under a necessity to desire, and under a necessity not to have that desire satisfied. Whence it follows, that either an infinitely wise Cause has misruled our desire to our condition; or an infinitely good Cause created us to make us miserable, in making a fundamental desire which includes all our desires in one, necessary to us, and in making it the law of our being, that it should end in disappointment.

PROPOSITION III.

*The Desire of Existence is not only endless, but
endlessly encreasing.*

1. THE desire of happiness being necessary, and always the same, a rational nature cannot but desire endless existence: And the longer it exists, it cannot but desire it the more: Or the desire of existence is not only endless, but endlessly encreasing with the duration of the rational being. This is true so far as a rational being is governed by the influence of reason. When it ceases to be governed by it, so far it ceases to be rational. The knowledge of such a being, as we have seen, must encrease with it's duration; and the intenseness of it's appetite for knowledge will

will always proportionably increase, with the greatness of the pleasure it enjoys in the improvement of reason. It cannot be doubted but this must necessarily take place in the rational nature, in it's perfect state, if we suppose it free from any blemish or weakness. To illustrate the truth of this proposition, let us turn our attention to a parallel case. The more designs and schemes a great politician, projector, or ingenious mechanic desires to accomplish, the more he desires life, and the greater is his regret to part with it, and leave his plans abortive. Just so, the more and higher gratifications existence presents to a man in prospect, the more intense will his desire of existence be.

2. Our conviction of this truth will be still stronger, if we consider more nearly that surprizing quality, above mentioned, of the rational nature, that it does not satisfy, so much as increase the appetite; and that there is no man so desirous of knowing more, as he that knows the most. There is a remarkable affinity between the inexhaustible numbers, and qualities of the objects of knowledge, and the insatiable disposition of the appetite of knowing: And all the acquisitions, we can make here, serve only to let us see our ignorance, to kindle our desires, and convince us of the infinite disproportion there is between what we can attain in such limited circumstances, and what is attainable. If we apply ourselves to the contemplation

plation and study of a vegetable, or an animal body, we are soon at the end of our tether. Certainty flies our most accurate researches: And all the little knowledge, they enable us to lay up in store, is parcelled and comprized in a very small number of propositions, notwithstanding all our industry, and really astonishing discoveries in these two branches of science. We find an endless progression of vessels, and parts too subtile for our assisted senses, and not easily accommodated to our numbers. We discover, and plume ourselves in the discovery of certain phenomena: But the solving any of them puts us immediately upon framing conjectures; and he who guesses with greatest probability, is accounted the most knowing man. This engages us in endless controversy, a sure sign that truth is yet to seek. Hypotheses, thus set in array against hypotheses, afford but a poor entertainment, or gratification to the rational nature, however they may sooth our vanity, or promote our interest. How pleasant, how satisfactory would it be, if we could attain a clearer knowledge of that so familiar matter, of which our bodies are made, if we could apply our discerning faculty to the constituent parts, and know precisely what size, figure, or degree of motion fits it for such an use, or instrumental purpose in the animal œconomy: How, and wherefore it attracts, repels, coheres, or rather is attracted,

tracted, repelled, and made to cohere so wonderfully, and with such effect. If there were no object of our knowledge, but our own bodies alone, or that of the most contemptible insect, or vegetable, we must be under a necessity of being ignorant of ten thousand times more than we know; and consequently, of having the rational appetite unsatisfied, in proportion; which nevertheless we cannot consistently believe was given us in vain, to be thus cruelly tantalized.

If we consider this vast frame of things around us, it is indeed a theatre of wonders: But they all rather fill the mind with admiration and astonishment, than satisfy it with knowledge. We discover infinite wisdom and contrivance in the order of the great or minute parts of it, a profuseness of magnificence, power, and skill, in their variety, motion, greatness and subserviency to numerous ends. But if we offer to explain any of these precisely, or till we have satisfied the rational appetite, and inquisitive disposition, that is in the soul, we find that the extreme delicacy, or the immense distance of the objects, and the weakness of the sense, however assisted, forbid us to expect complete satisfaction without or even within this our own system; as long as we receive the impressions of those things through our present senses, and till we can apply them to our apprehending faculty in some more perfect way. Yet of what a bold aspiring
nature

nature is that same faculty ! What thinking mortal would not wish to be in such a state, as that he could apply it to those distant worlds, where new scenes of magnificence, power and wisdom, would gratify it, far beyond the utmost stretch of his present apprehension ! how ambitiously does it attempt in vain to soar to the out-lying regions of the universe ! It would even visit the confines of matter, to which it is not allowed to travel even in imagination. It strives to allay its insatiable desire of knowing, by contemplating the pertransfible parts of immensity ; it looks down with pity on the weak, or narrow-thoughted man, who can affirm that the immense regions lying without our ken, afford not wonders of wisdom and power, increasing perpetually, and unattainable even by its highest advances in improvement. It is the contrivance only of a conceited blockhead, to make himself easy in his ignorance, to imagine they contain but the same things, over and over again.

Yet what is all this but mere matter, an inert, a lifeless being ? What is it that moves these prodigious masses of ponderous, inanimate substance, with such rapidity and force ? What is it that impels them round in their courses with so much regularity ? Or what is it that moves even the little, yet equally incomprehensible systems of our own bodies ? Of what kind of nature is that principle within us, which thinks, reflects, and understands ?

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This is our nature ; but it is not the more known to us for being ours. It is a knowing nature : But it does not know itself. It has an ardent desire to know : Yet this desire it cannot satisfy, with any clear knowledge of itself ; or without being bewildered with continual doubts and perplexities. What is the vinculum of union, between a perceiving, knowing nature, and an extended solid, figured substance ? By what medium can two such differing beings, that have not any thing in common to both, affect each other ? Or what new unknown powers of acting, what different ways of knowing, and living, may our percipient part have, when the tie between it, and the body, is loose ? These things, we are confident, are knowable, the object of some intellect, though not of ours ; except we should say that something can exist, which is not known at all by any thing. From the consideration of this aggregate of things, moved and moving, we do indeed collect some few material portions of knowledge, which afford us a comfortable prospect, that we shall not be disappointed of the rest. We find in them the marks of wisdom, unsearchable to us, of power, able to perform all things, infinitely more than all, that we can conceive, of beneficence unbounded, in fitting and adjusting the parts together in such manner, that percipient beings are affected with much pleasure, from the order
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and disposition of them. We have seen how by a few, easy, certain steps, reason is led to the contemplation of an eternal, all-perfect First Cause, it's Author, Protector, and constant Benefactor, the never-failing sponsor for the performance of all, we can reasonably desire or hope for. This indeed is knowledge, which alone is worthy of it's most attentive, and incessant application.

5. Some persons have affected to esteem it presumptuous to say, we are able, by our utmost researches, to attain to any certain knowledge of the attributes of the Supreme Being. But our knowledge of them, though scanty, and superficial, it is confessed, is clear and certain, as far as it goes. It is vouchsafed us, in that degree precisely, which is necessary to creatures, possessed of that portion of intelligence, which is allotted to us here. The infinite perfection of the divine nature is sufficiently demonstrable, as appears by the first Section of this work. Many salutary practical inferences are deduced from thence : For instance :—It is impossible to such a nature not to be present in all times and places, not to know intimately the thoughts, words, actions, the pursuits, desires, wants of all his intelligent creatures.—It is impossible to such a nature not to preside over them with the most perfect wisdom, justice, goodness, directing them always, by the best adapted means, though often inscrutable to us, to the happiest ends.

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—The multiplicity of things cannot perplex, nor their minuteness escape a nature necessarily all-discerning: Their distance, their variety, cannot distract a Being, whose presence and power are unlimited, who cannot but see all things at once.—As at first, of his own good pleasure, he created all things, so by the infinitude and absolute necessity of his perfections, he still exercises an exactly just superintendence, and wise government over them, with a strictness and punctuality far beyond all finite conception.—Hence appears the reasonableness, the necessity, since we are constituted rational and free beings, that we should always entertain a grateful and reverential sense of our perpetual dependance upon him.—Hence arises our duty, our obligation, if we would not act against our greatest, dearest interests, of adoring, honouring, supplicating, loving, and fearing him, and especially of our humbly, but cheerfully obeying all his known commands.—Thus far is demonstration, science, in all the propriety of speech. And a great instance it is of the wisdom and goodness of the Supreme Being, that this portion of knowledge, which is so absolutely necessary to our comfort and welfare here, should be so clear, so easily and generally attainable; fewer præcognita being required to this, than perhaps any other truth whatsoever.

6. Certain and necessary as this knowledge is, does it satisfy, or rather does it not excite,
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the appetite of knowing more; and that eminently above all other parts of knowledge? The inexhaustible nature of the object, answering to its own insatiability, is qualified to become the source to it of perpetual, and ever-increasing pleasure. Let us confront the gloomy expectations of the Atheist, whose refuge in despair lies in the prospect of utter annihilation at the dissolution of the body, with the blessed assurance of endless advances in knowledge, of this rapturous, this ennobling nature: Let us then determine, who are contending for, and who against the interests, and honour of the rational nature.

7. The utmost efforts of reason here can only ascertain that behind these faint outlines, and first discoveries of science, lie the endless regions of undiscovered truth, far out of view, and inaccessible to the utmost industry of a thinking spirit confined in its operations to material instruments alone, the objects of contemplation to various ranks of beings above our order. That there are such beings existing separate from our gross matter, we have even here a strong presumption at least, if not a demonstrable certainty, as may by most probable analogy be made to appear. How pleasing, how ravishing a prospect would it open to our view, to contemplate the different orders of such beings; to admire their œconomy, subordination, different offices, never ending progress, and

rising gradation; their extensive, though limited powers and spheres of action, their surprizing compends of knowledge and reasoning! In short, how glorious an object of ambition is it to stand candidate for a participation of the philosophy of the world of spirits! This cannot, in the order of nature, contain less variety, and wonder, than the material; or rather the effects of infinite power and wisdom, must here as much exceed the highest we can conceive, in the material world, as the nature of spirit is superior to that of matter. What rational being would not wish to commence this new sort of existence, to share the enjoyments of a pure spirit, to enter upon so new a scene of consciousness and knowledge, to be admitted to a communication with these beings, the inferior orders of them only; endlessly passing through new degrees of probation, to be licentiates of still higher ranks of being? Dare the adversaries of light, and these our glorious hopes, declare this is impossible to the Almighty? Or can we ever get through the instances of infinite power and love, extended towards all his creatures? How shall they presume to set bounds to the possible effects of them even to ourselves? Let those who think they have adequately considered, what infinite power and love import, deliberately answer this. Can any undoubted instances of these excellent attributes, of which we are able
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to form a just conception, not be within their compass? Can any good, the reasonable object of our desire, not be within the reach of infinite love? Shall we start a new possibility to infinite power, or prevent infinite goodness in the effects of infinite love? May not then the rational nature, be the first step of this never-ending progression in knowledge and perfection?

8. And now, I think it is plain that this surprizing, but strangely disregarded property, must be really inherent in the human understanding; that the more we know, the more will our desire of knowledge be increased. In every branch of science universally, the more things we understand, the more things we discover to be not yet understood. The conviction of our own ignorance, is perpetually growing upon us, in greater proportion than our knowledge. We are, with a just precision of thought, resembled to travellers, who the higher they climb, *see Alps on Alps arise*, or discover larger tracts of country lying before them, to be yet travelled over. By endeavouring to allay the appetite, we excite and make it more importunate: we enlarge the capacity which we aim to fill. Will any one yet say that reason is a faculty well suited by an infinitely wise Being, to this short period of existence?

OBJECTION I.

EXPERIENCE, it may be said, may be brought in evidence against all this reasoning. It asserts that this love of knowledge is not so strong, nor does it so increase, as is here pretended: since we frequently see very knowing persons lay aside their pursuit of farther knowledge, and at any rate, not take themselves for greater blockheads, the farther they advance.

I answer, that it is possible a man may get a little knowledge in some things, and desire no more. But in so far as he desires no more, he acts not in conformity to the rational nature, but against it. In this case indeed, knowledge does not convince him of his ignorance. It makes him insolent, vain, and self-sufficient. If he shall chance to get the better of some of the common prejudices of infancy or childhood, here perhaps he may stop short, and comparing himself with others, who are still under these prejudices, he may grow considerable in his own sight, and esteem himself a person of consequence in that of others. Looking continually on that side, where things are lower than he, makes him swell, at finding himself higher than they. Besides, a reflection upon the advantage, resulting from the esteem of other men, may occasionally give an unlucky cast to our temper: It may hinder us
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from enjoying any satisfaction in our own knowledge of a thing, unless we convince others that we know it, by insulting those who know it not. This weakness is as poor and silly, as that of the man, who being free from pain himself, takes a pleasure in making ostentation of this immunity to those, who are actually under the present torture of it. To be susceptible of such little pleasure as this, is to be incapable of rational, solid pleasure: It spoils, it entirely takes away our natural taste of it. Other causes may co-operate in blocking up the way to our farther improvement in knowledge. A man may go certain lengths in a speculative science, without having that rational pleasure from it, which he might and should have, when he contents himself with learning what truths have been discovered by wiser men, without making any use of it, or applying it any manner of way. The man, who studies, merely because a certain point of learning is in vogue at present, or from the shame of being accounted shallow, or because, finding nothing else to amuse him, he has fallen mechanically, as it were, into it, as into a beaten track, may be little the better for it. Yet even he must be incorrigibly dull indeed, if he has not found out this, that there is nothing so purely speculative, as that it has not a relation to the Author of truth, to ourselves, or to something else. That any thing should be

entirely detached from all things else, and quite unrelated, has been shewn to be impossible, and contradictory. The rational student, on the other hand, will not fail to consider his subject, with all it's relations; being mindful that every part of knowledge adds light to all the rest; and receives light from all. A rightly disposed mind will mount up to the Fountain of all truth, from the most abstract theorem, the most common appearance in the face of the heavens, the meanest insect, the minutest atom of matter. There is nothing that is not vocal, nothing that is not practical to the rational beholder. Those persons, who are supposed to haunt the speculative sciences, yet exhibit no signs of making their knowledge practical, may be infected with an itch of curiosity, a momentary passion for novelty: And finding afterwards, through their own fault, their acquisition fruitless, it ceases to be pleasant to them, at the instant the novelty is over; and is succeeded of course by a painful listlessness, or nausea. This is a sore distemper, much like a false appetite, or bad digestion; where that which should nourish, and maintain health, turns to noxious humours, and breeds diseases. Swarms of these pedants abound, in all the great seminaries of learning especially, who affect to pursue the speculative parts of knowledge, slighting what is practical, as mechanical, and too low for genius: As if the characteristic

teristic of a man of genius, was his managing the matter so, that whatever he knows may be of no use to himself, or any body else. Others perversely dissemble, and misrepresent their own feelings, with respect to rational knowledge. From an affected caution of not being imposed upon, they are constantly denying every thing; seeking demonstration for first principles, and such plain axioms, where no mean term can make the relation of the two extremes more apparent than it is, at first sight; or demanding another kind of demonstration, than the nature of the thing will admit. These coxcombs spoil their health, to preserve their complexion. They are not judges of demonstration themselves, so that it loses its efficacy upon them: And they deny so long, till they lose the capacity of being convinced. It would be no loss to the rational world, if all Sceptics would refuse to eat, till they got rigid demonstration that their stomachs would digest aright: But to themselves one need not wish a greater curse than their own unhappy temper.

All these, in these particulars at least, act contrary to the rational nature: So that what is true of the rational nature, will not be true, but demonstrably false of them, in that respect. Yet the assertion still holds constant of the rational nature, that it will always desire knowledge the more, the more it knows;

knows; and therefore always desire existence the more, the longer it exists.

OBJECTION 2.

ANOTHER objection, in part examined and answered before, may here start up afresh, in a different shape. It may be urged, that all this reasoning seems to proceed upon a wrong supposition: That mankind has no better use for the rational nature, but to indulge speculation for the advancement of knowledge and truth. Whereas it has been confessed, that a provision for the necessities of life will not allow the greatest part of mankind leisure to commence followers of pure intellectual pleasure, or to improve their understandings by a search of truth. This can be the lot but of a few sedentary persons, who are, as it were, the depositaries of the stock of science of the whole species. It may be said, that these mighty men of reason should be thankful for the leisure allowed them; but not prescribe rules impracticable to others: That many good men have but little improved their rational nature: That, not unfrequently, ignorant men are the most innocent, and often more useful than the most knowing, who are, not rarely, found to be the pests, and disturbers of society, the subverters of states, the enemies of public peace, &c.

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Though it be allowed that all this may be sometimes reconcileable to experience, the present reasoning, unless it be wilfully misunderstood, is not in the least affected by it. It is true that knowledge, in a perverse nature, enables it to be more injuriously and fatally perverse. It has all along been confessed, that there is a possibility, for our original liberty, and a reality, for our depraved nature, to be drawn to abuse reason, to its own destruction; and we may thus pervert even our improved reason. But surely no one will say, that in doing this, we act rationally. And it is enough to have proved that, in so far as we act rationally, things will be as before asserted. In the most perfect state of humanity, it is certain that we shall still desire to know more, the more we already know; and this perfection we must necessarily suppose to have originally been, and perpetually still to be, in the intention of the infinitely good and wise Creator. It is a contradiction to suppose that our all-perfect Author should have given to his creatures a certain faculty, whose nature it was to tend continually to higher degrees of improvement, a nature capable of improvement, in an endless progress; and at the same time to place them in circumstances, where they should be under a necessity not to improve it. This is a design destructive of itself. What, shall we say that a Being, to whom impiety itself dare

dare not impute folly or malice, gave the faculty of being rational to many millions of his creatures, and yet denied them the leisure to be rational, through the whole period of their existence? We see to what height reason may be improved, in the instances of a *Socrates*, or a *Newton*. All the rest of the species are probably born with faculties originally equal to theirs, and all capable of improvement, though not in equal degree. We have already seen the absurdity of supposing these noble faculties were given them, for no higher purpose, than to supply the place of instinct in brutes; that they were made thinking beings, only to be yoked in with the labouring ox. Let them believe this, who have the knack of believing any thing. Still it is asked, does it not appear to be so in fact? We are bid to turn our eyes upon the more necessitous, and more uneducated part of mankind, who seem to be rational only by example, and imitation; who, having no possible opportunity of exercising, and improving their understanding, appear to have lost, except to a certain very limited degree, the faculty of reason. We are bid to survey those countries, where the conditions of life are not, by far, so equally constituted, as here, but where the poorer sort are literally the abject slaves, the beasts of burthen of their tyrannous lords. This object of contemplation indeed is truly melancholy, but shall we say, this

this was the original design of things, with respect to these beings; and that this design is really, and finally, accomplished here? Did the supremely wise, and all-powerful First Cause endue innumerable creatures, all of one species, with a certain excellent faculty, and that generally, in an equal degree of original perfection, with a design, that only a few of them should make the least use of it? We might as well say, that a wise, and good Being, had given a species of creatures two legs to walk upon, with a design that only one in a million should use both these legs, but that all the rest should with pain and trouble, drag one at least, if not both, behind him, without any use at all.

But what shall we say then? How has all the disorder complained of come about? What can have so distorted things from their original constitution? Complete satisfaction, in a point of such perplexity, is not to be expected here below, where it is wisely ordained, that we must *walk by faith, not by sight* (u). That it should always remain, in a great degree, inexplicable, while we see nothing of man, but his station here, appears perfectly agreeable to the nature of things, or the decree of Supreme Wisdom. Yet this, at least, may be clearly demonstrated: That man, by the abuse of his

(u) 2 Cor. v. 7.

freedom,

freedom, has wrested things from their original, or natural state, has impaired his rational and moral faculties, and made the improvement of them an arduous task; introduced a train of unnatural passions, that ruffle and disturb the serene composure, which is indispensibly requisite to sobriety of thought, and profitable reflection. These passions are the dire effect of having debased the rational nature, by applying it to the pursuit of ends destructive of itself, or it's dearest interests. Hence arises the unequal and disorderly state of things in the moral world, the pride and cruelty of the oppressor, armed with power, the insolent disdain of lawful authority in the multitude, if too mildly treated. It is this, that renders the greatest part of the species drudges, beasts of burthen to the few. As to the necessity, obliging the generality of mankind to lay out so much of their time in employments, which so little regard the improvement, or perfection of their nature; it is presumed there cannot be a better account given of this, in reason and philosophy, than is given by *Moses*, who tells us, that the earth was cursed for man's sake; and that he, who might otherwise have spent his time, in un-painful application to the knowledge of the nature of things; in delightful contemplation of the instances of the wisdom, power, and goodness of the Creator of all worlds; was, for his disobedience, he and all his posterity,

terity, who trod, and still tread in the steps of his perverseness, sentenced to earn their bread in the sweat of their brow. The same sacred writings, which thus inform us by what means evil, moral and natural, or sin and misery, were introduced into the world, have happily pointed out, in the Gospel of Christ, upon what ground we must build our hopes of recovery from our fallen state, to a height of perfection, superior even to our primitive purity. To repair the divine image in the soul of man, the Redeemer of mankind instructs us to regard this life, as preparatory only to a future period of existence, where all the seeming confusion of this period shall be reduced to order and harmony; where a certain prospect of endless happiness, for evermore increasing, and far exceeding the comprehension of our highest faculties, shall await us, if we duly exert those faculties here, to the best of our power, in the improvement of our moral and rational nature. The infidel assertor of the mortality of the soul is invited to give a more satisfactory account of this matter if he can. The issue of the grand debatable point between him and his adversaries may be put upon the success of this single problem. Only let him reconcile to reason the apparent necessity, in the present state of things, which prevents the generality of mankind from improving their minds, or approaching to the integrity, or perfection of

of their rational nature, by any other account, or hypothesis; and due respect shall be paid to his probable scheme. To put infidelity upon attempting to do this, in good earnest, would be a most effectual method of stopping it's mouth, of lowering the exorbitance, and exposing the absurdity and emptiness of all it's own conceits; and of establishing the truth of what all reasonable and sober christians believe. We are taught by the gospel to consider man as placed here in a state of probation, or discipline for a better life to come: For a resolution of the great difficulty in question, and all the perplexities of our present state, we are led to look up with hope, with confidence, with satisfaction, to that future life, where we trust to see the glorious scheme of divine wisdom, with respect to man, completed, which is evidently but commencing here. Let the infidel, whose judgment is not yet so fatally perverted, as to aim at exterminating, with the grosser Atheists, all reason, wisdom, or design out of the universe, let him consider the repugnancy in the supposition, that the wise Author of beings should have given to a set of creatures a capacity, and natural tendency to attain to a very high degree of exaltation, and all this to so little purpose; tying them down, all but one in a thousand, to the same drudgery as the horse and mule, the brute without understanding. Let him account for the general disappointment

ment of the desires, and natural aptitudes of so noble a nature, in which every other has an equal original right with that one; while all the rest are restrained from it, by unequal lot, and cruel necessity. This would make him feel a weight, which all his philosophy, or boasted freedom of thinking, would never enable him to move, and which his ignorance, and unskilfulness alone, now makes him think and speak so light of. If it be from a secret confidence of ability to loose this knot, that he arrogantly contemns the friends of religion as credulous bigots, weak slaves of vulgar prejudices; let him shew his skill, or rather let him be useful to mankind, in the only way he can, by exposing his impious temerity. In the meantime, let him apply to himself the following just emblem of his frenzy, and insolence. Let him figure to his fancy an *Archimedes*, easily wielding, and managing at will, some stupendous weight, by an admirably contrived machine; while a foolish by-stander was impudently sneering at the great mechanic, and all his admirers; though he neither knew the power of the machine, the force of the weight, nor the application of the one to the other. Let him behold the rashness of this idle censurer proceeding to attempt himself the management of this wonderful piece of mechanism; and misconducting it so, that the weight falls back, and

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suddenly

suddenly crushes himself, and all around him.

As to what is urged, that many men act rightly and justly, within their limited sphere of action; whose understandings are but little improved, by the acquisition of knowledge; this is allowed to be true; but beside the present question. The good man acts rightly, or rationally in all kinds of action, of which the improvement of his understanding, though of prime and capital obligation, is yet but one. It is true, that a man may improve his reason, and so far act rightly, who may nevertheless act wrong, or irrationally in other respects. But it is as true that, without improving his reason, he can act but blindly. The rational nature, in it's perfection, is the blessed effect of the all-perfect First Cause, the Author of all good, to whom alone all that is good in us must be referred. It is his decree that reason should be the commanding faculty in man. It must therefore be pleasing to him that this faculty should be enabled to exercise it's command over it's inferior faculties, with wisdom, with propriety: And it must as evidently be displeasing to him, that man, by wilful neglect, should suffer this faculty to become, in some degree, unsuitable to us. Immorality, it is certain, is more derogatory from the perfection and dignity of human nature, than ignorance; and

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and knowledge, which bears no actual reference to life and practice, is utterly insignificant. The boast of an improved understanding, in a depraved and vicious character, is a monstrous absurdity in the nature of things, a pretension to make a contradiction consistent with itself.

SECTION V.

Man, by the Nature and Constitution of his Body, is inevitably subject to more bodily Pain than Pleasure.

LET it be allowed, before we enter more particularly upon this subject, to insert here the following general observation concerning the nature of pain and pleasure.

PROPOSITION I.

Pain is much more extensive in it's Nature than Pleasure.

1. THE presence of every object we esteemed requisite, often excites no positive pleasure; but the absence of any one is sure to raise a real pain. Thus, to have all the limbs entire is but a negative pleasure; but to have a leg or an arm broken is an actual pain. The absence of any object unpleasing to the perception affords us no immediate pleasure; but the presence of it infallibly pains us. Not to feel the effect of boiling water upon our flesh, we esteem but a negative blessing: Let it fall upon our skin, we shall suddenly complain of real torment. Not to be in dread of a dagger, or poison,
while

while we are eating, we cannot, without some previous peculiarity of circumstance, consider as a great happiness. But to sit, with *Damocles*, under the point of a sword, suspended by a slender hair, would spoil our appetite, and fill us with excruciating terror (x). Moral instances of this sort occur most frequently in human life. In short, we may properly apply to pleasure and pain, like good and evil, this maxim of the schoolmen: *Bonum fit ex integrâ causâ, malum ex quolibet defectu.*

2. This extensiveness of pain above pleasure appears to arise from hence: Because it requires an inconceivable number of concurrent circumstances, or necessary conditions, to raise us even to a state of indolence, or to the bare confines only between pleasure and pain. We are struck with astonishment, when we are led to reflect upon the multitude and variety of things, which must all conspire and agree, that we may enjoy but a tolerably healthy constitution of body. And yet it does not appear, that even perfect health is, properly speaking, any positive bodily pleasure. And we may, I presume, double this number of events and circumstances, in order to constitute both mind and body, in a state of indolence.

(x) *Distictus ensis cui super impiâ
Cervice pendet, non Siculæ dapes
Dulcem elaborabunt saporem.*

Hor. Od. i. Lib. 3.

Let us consider what a variety of cases may occur, which make us deficient to ourselves, in this respect, through rashness, ignorance and folly; and in how many ways more, other things, which are not in our power, may be deficient to us. And a defect of but one single ingredient, requisite to indolence only, may make us heartily miserable. Imagine a man possessed of none but negative pleasure; or of whom it can only be said, that he is not unhappy, because he is not pinched with want, nor pained with disease, unjustly oppressed, nor basely calumniated; because he has suffered no remarkable loss, nor grieved for the death of his children, or the misfortune of his friend. All these, and alas! how many more conditions, are there absolutely necessary to happiness but purely negative? In how many ways is it possible for such a person to be miserable, in the loss, or want of something, that did not make him happy? The man, whom we may congratulate upon the possession of these few things, we look up to, as a rare being, and uncommonly fortunate.

3. Except in the instance of rational pleasure, Indolence, or a mere exemption from pain, appears, upon the whole, to be the completest happiness we are permitted to enjoy upon earth. We are not sensible of so great delight, upon attaining any thing, which tends to raise us above indolence,

as upon the acquisition of those things, which merely serve to relieve present pain, or bring us nearer to a state of indolence. Thus he, who is freed from a fit of the gout or stone, is not capable of receiving such another addition of pleasant perception, or of being exalted above indolence, to so exquisite a sense of pleasure; the height of which is in proportion as he before was sunk below it. His sensations are much the same as those of the man, who is unexpectedly saved from ship-wreck, and all the terrors of death. He feels more gladness, in his deliverance, than all, that the sun shines on, could have made him feel, if he had suffered no distress. The latter surely is in no better plight, (in almost all respects, he is in a much worse,) than he, who staid securely on shore, who yet feels nothing of this joy. The truth is, we may fall lower and lower still below indolence, and the excess of our delight, in drawing nearer to it again, shews the excess of our previous misery. This gradation cannot be shewn upon the other side of indolence. Our positive pleasure is capable of no such heightenings, as the negative. To impress this idea more strongly, let us cast an eye upon the behaviour of *Cræsus* (y), in

(y) Κύρος δὲ αὐτὸν λύσας, κατέσσε τε ἐγὼς αὐτοῦ, καὶ κέρτα ἐν πολλῇ προμηθεΐᾳ ἔχει. Ἀπεδάμαζε τε ὄρων καὶ αὐτὸς, καὶ οἱ περὶ ἐκείνον ὄντες πάντες. Ὁ δὲ συννδῶν ἐχόμενος, ἡσυχός ἦν. Herodot. Lib. i.

Herodotus, after he was brought down from the pile, on which he was to have been burnt alive. Observe the silence, the thoughtfulness in which he is immediately buried, after so terrible a consternation. He wants a little time to compose his mind, for the admission of such a tide of happiness. We need not question whether such a deliverance yielded him a more exalted pitch of delight and rapture, than he could have enjoyed even in vanquishing *Cyrus*, and all *Asia*. The supreme cause, or true theological reason of this great inequality, in the system of pain and pleasure, seems to be this: That the all-wise God ordained, that with respect to every other kind of pleasure, except the moral and rational, our highest attainment here should be only ease, or a relief from the pain and craving of an importunate appetite, not happiness. The constitution of our nature is against it. By experience we must know that, after we are come to a certain pitch of ease in body and mind, all that can be done to us, or for us, beyond that, cannot affect our nature greatly, without making us painfully sensible, that it is all but vanity and vexation of spirit. All the affluence above necessity cannot be so pleasing to us, as the supply of a small want, to make up what necessity calls for; because there is no way of applying it to our nature, or giving us a capacity of feeling the pleasure of it.

Millia

*Millia frumenti tua triverit area centum ;
Non tuus hoc capiet venter plus quam meus—
——— Vel dic quid referat intra
Natura fines viventi, jugera centum, an
Mille ares ?— At suave est ex magno tollere acervo.—
Dum ex parvo nobis tantundem haurire relinquo,
Cur tua plus laudas cumeris granaria nostris ?*

Hor. Sat. i.

This confesses what sort of happiness our nature points to, and what scanty measure it admits of every other kind. This places in its full light the frenzy of the unavailing wish of (x) *Alexander the Great*. We hear of no answer, made by *Pyrrhus*, to the last, most rational question of *Cineas*. It was unanswerable. This makes all moral writers, and philosophers of every age, inculcate this constant rule, to live within the bounds of nature, or according to the dictates of simple nature: meaning, that nature had chalked out how far we are capable of genuine pleasures of sensation. In a word, immunity from pain, or want of some sort, is essential to sensitive pleasure; and beyond that, nature appears to have laid no foundation for it.

4. Hence we see that the measure of our happiness, upon the whole, is not to be computed from the greatness of our joy. The man condemned to death, who receives a full pardon, instead of being led out to

(x) Ὅποι τῆς ταύτης ἀρχῆς, ὑσπερ καὶ τῆς γῆς ὁ
Θεὸς ἐπέμπε. Arrian. Lib. v.

execution,

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execution, is seized with an emotion of joy so extremely violent, and insupportable, that it is not fit to give it him without some caution, that it prove not fatal. Yet would any one chuse to be placed in that sad exigency, for the sake of this momentary excess of joy? How much we are indebted to previous pain, for the pleasure we feel, in this period of our existence, we are never aware, without mature experience, and reflection. The languor that usually attends a flow of prosperity, and easy circumstances, is only to be accounted for, upon these principles. It would afford but slender joy to one who had no appetite, or a palled one, to be set down to a sumptuous table; though the plainest fare would give him exquisite pleasure if he were pinched with a keen sense of hunger. “*Quid tibi divitiis opus est, quæ te esurire cogunt?*” says the Scythian Barbarian to Alexander——“*Primus omnium satietate parasti famem.*” If a man possesses a competency to supply all the real conveniencies of life; whatever he may obtain over and above that, were it ten, or ten thousand times as much, may gratify some appetite, that supposes vanity, folly, or ignorance, but can meet with no natural capacity in himself, to which it may all be applied. Things that owe all their pleasantness to natural pain or artificial want, lie under this necessity of becoming flat and insipid, when that pain or want is all removed.

moved. Let it be here allowed to repeat, that it is quite otherwise with rational and moral pleasures. They have not these symptoms of imperfection. More of them is applicable to our nature, in endless progression. They derive not their pleasantness from a previous pain, or the removal of present uneasiness. They are pleasant above indolence; and the delight resulting from the perception of them is all felt, and best enjoyed, after we are on the right side of indolence: And it is then capable of heightnings without end.—“ They ravish, and sublime the thoughts, says Bp. *Wilkins*, at the end of his *Dædalus*, with more clear and angelical contentments. *Archimedes* was so generally taken up with these mathematical studies, these familiar sirens, as *Plutarch* stiles them, that he forgot both his meat and drink, and other necessities of nature; nay that he neglected the saving of his life, when that rude soldier, in the pride and haste of victory, would not give him leave to finish his demonstration.”—He adds several other well known instances of the prodigious intenseness of rational delight in that great mechanic, and in *Thales*, and *Pythagoras*. Speaking of the water-screw of *Archimedes*, he says—“ It being an engine so ingenious as cannot be sufficiently expressed; the smith in *Milan* conceived it so to be, who having, without any teaching, or information, found it out, fell mad with

with mere joy of it."—Other rational pleasures there are, more serene, if not so excessively intense, as those instanced by the good Bishop; such as arise, for example, from the contemplation of the frame of nature, and the visible effects therein displayed, of infinite wisdom, power, and goodness, with the confidence, we derive from thence, that all our interests and hopes depend not upon the uncertain disposition of blind chance, but are in the hands of a just and gracious Being, to whose dispensation we may always joyfully and securely resign them.

5. The gross of mankind, unwisely fancying that the pleasures of sense, or the various gratifications of the bodily appetites, might be raised considerably above indolence, and carried to what height and degree they pleased, have, since the first formation of society, been refining, or vainly attempting to improve upon them. For all the success these attempts in general have had, or ever will have, is at best to be amused with our own endeavours, but most frequently to incur a great deal more of that pain, we mean to avoid. It is the unskillfulness of this toil and struggle, which makes men provoke factitious appetites, and vex, and weary themselves in the pursuit of inconsistent and vicious pleasures. Nothing is of more consequence to the good of mankind, than to know how far every kind of pleasure

pleasure can reach, and to pursue those alone, which have a natural aptitude and sufficiency to satisfy. What wild havock is brought into the world, by the notion of some men, that exorbitant power would make them happy! And what little foundation is there for this notion, in the nature of man! *Οὕτως ἡ τύχη μικρόν ἐστὶ πρὸς τὴν φροσίν*—says Plutarch, with respect to Cæsar, and Pompey. Others imagine that the possession of wealth would raise their enjoyments to any desired height. And almost all men have tampered with the pleasures of sense, to screw them above their level. And while they pursue pleasure, under these false appearances, and make the attaining it the measure of right and wrong, the earth is filled with rapine, violence and bloodshed; faith and truth are brought into contempt; religion, and the laws are trampled under foot.

6. Another remarkable property of irrational pleasures is this, that though they do not satisfy, yet they become at length necessary, and the want of them uneasy to us. A rooted habit has often as importunate a call, as a natural appetite. It creates an imaginary, if not a real congruity between the object, and the vitiated faculty, and takes a ruder and more obstinate hold of the heart, than if the pleasure it covets had an actual foundation in nature. The tears of a Lesbia, for the loss of her sparrow, might
have

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have been as real as those of another woman, for something of more value. Some men have not been able to survive a moderate loss of their fortune, though what they had left was more than sufficient to answer the demands of nature; that is, though they, strictly speaking, lost nothing, but what was superfluous. It would scarce be credited, if it were not often verified in fact, that men, who under the pressure of well-grounded fear, and real danger, are content to accept life on any terms, and accompanied with almost any hardships, should yet when placed without the reach of those fears and dangers, think life not worth preserving, and scornfully throw it away, for the lack of some adventitious pleasure, which was never designed for our nature. The gamester, who upon an ill run of luck, ends his days at once with a sword, or a pistol, might have consented to redeem his life, upon condition of working out the remainder of it in an iron mine, when condemned to die, and ready to be dragged to execution upon the wheel. Ignorance of true pleasure, and inveterate habits of false ones, make even these last pos- sess, and engross the whole soul. We turn, with horror and disdain, from the spectacle, exhibited by the Historian, (a) of the Em-

(a) Τῆς περὶ τα καλὰ σπουδῆς ἀπῆγεν ἑαυτὸν ἐδιδύλοντο δὲ πᾶσαν αὐτὴ τὴν ψυχὴν, νύκτωρ τε καὶ μεθ' ἡμέρας ἐπά- λουσι καὶ ἀκόλαστοι σαματῶν ἠδοναί. Herodian, lib. i. cap. 42.

peror Commodus, who withdrew himself from the honours of his station, and all that was truly desirable and laudable in life, because obscene and bestial pleasures of the body quelled and captivated his mind, night and day successively. Caligula wished the Roman people had but one neck, for no other reason, but that they did not like the green faction of racers, as well as he. So addicted to them was this imperial jockey, that he shared their coarse suppers in their stables, at which he used to sit, entertained all the while with judicial inquisitions by torture (*b*). Antonine Caracalla caused the prætorian band (ἑράτευμα) to fall upon the multitude, and massacre great numbers, for speaking irreverently of the charioteer, he favoured (*c*). Some apology might be due, for exposing these execrable monsters to the eye of the reader; were it not requisite sometimes to make the heart of man painfully sensible of the frightful consequences of giving way to the desire of irrational pleasure. But in more familiar life,

(*b*) "Inensus turbæ farenti, adversus studium suum, exclamavit: Utinam populus Romanus unam cervicem haberet.—Animum quoque remittenti, ludoque et epulis dedito, eadem dictorum factorumque sævitia aderat. Sæpe in conspectu prandentis vel commessantis seris quæstiones per tormenta habebantur." Sueton. in Calig. Cap. 30.

(*c*) Ο δὲ οὐδαμῶς αὐτῶν ὑβρίζων, κίλευσε τῇ πλήθει περισπᾶν το ἑράτευμα, καὶ πορνύων τὴν κακίαν ἢ ἀνάχων οἰκονομίας. Ὁ δὲ ἐρασιπύων, τὸν βιάζεσθαι καὶ ἀρπαγὴν λαβῆναι ἐξήστειν — κτλ — Herodian. lib. iv. cap. 11.

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let any one call to mind the daily instances, which fall under his observation: he must be convinced that nothing so much increases it's pains, as hunting after irrational pleasure; and that no way is so compendious to attain to all the happiness we are designed for, as keeping some rational and moral end ever in view, to have the fewest and most moderate appetites to satisfy.

PROPOSITION II.

All bodily Pleasures are merely Mitigations of Pain.

1. THE last Proposition may be considered as a general proof, that man, by the nature and constitution of his body, is inevitably subject to more pain than pleasure. But this will appear more distinctly, by a particular induction, or survey of the several pleasures of sense. These are the pleasures of eating, drinking, refreshment by warmth, coolness, rest, &c. in general, all gratifications of our material half, considered abstractedly from any reflections, or operations of the mind. By the most accurate examination of these, we shall be convinced, that either they are no pleasures at all, or only pleasures in so far as they alleviate pain felt, by recruiting some natural expence, or decay of the body, rectifying some incidental disorder,

disorder, or curing some naturally recurring disease. There is no pleasure in eating, but when appetite gives it a pleasant relish; the pleasure bearing still a just proportion to the degree of appetite. The most exquisite dainties become tasteless to a full appetite, and to a cloyed one uneasy and loathsome (d). Where the uneasiness of hunger previous to the pleasure of eating is scarce perceptible, the gratification, which eating can afford us, is always inconsiderable. The pain of hunger is a stronger hint, and appetite a fainter, which nature vouchsafes to give us, to warn us in kindness of the waste and decay of parts of the body. A suitable recruit of these is necessary to preserve the regularity of the animal œconomy. As from the disorder of this œconomy, our animal part languishes, and feels pain, by a salutary decree of providence; it is as wisely ordained, that pleasure should constantly be annexed to the removal, or alleviation of that

(d) The rebuke, which Virtue gives to Indolence, in the fable of Prodicus, sets this matter in a fine light.

Ὁ τλήμων [κακία] τί ὃ σὺ ἀγασθὸν ἔχεις; ἢ τὶ ἡδὺ
 ἴδῃς, μηδὲν τούτων ἐνεκα πρῶτην ἔδειξας; ἢ τις εἰδὲ τήν
 τῶν ἡδῶν ἐπιθυμίαν ἀγαμέναι; ἀλλὰ πῶς ἐπιθυμῆσαι,
 πάντων ἐμπύπασαι, πῶς μὲν πηνὴν εἰδύναι, πῶς δὲ
 διψῆν, πίνουσα; ἢ ἵνα μὲν ἡδίσταται, ὁψιπλὺς μηχανῶ-
 μένη; ἵνα δὲ ἡδίστα πίνῃ, οὐκ ἐπὶ τῇ τελευτῇ παρασκευάζῃ;
 ἢ τὸ θύρας χίονα πειδύναι ζητεῖ; ἵνα δὲ καδυπνώσῃ
 ἡδίστα, ἢ μόνον τὰς σφαιρὰς μαλακάς, ἀλλὰ καὶ τὰς κλίνας.
 καὶ τὰ ὑπόβαθρα τοῖς κλίμας παρασκευάζῃ; ἢ γὰρ διὰ τὸ
 σπῆναι, ἀλλὰ διὰ τὸ μηδὲν ἔχειν ὅτι ποῖς, ὅπως ἐπιθυμῇ;
 τὰ δὲ ἀσφίσια πρὸς τὴν δεικνύσαν ἀναγκάζῃς — κ λ λ. —

Prodic. apud Xenoph. Memorab. lib. ii. cap. i.

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pain,

pain, when it has answered its purpose, and the order is restored, and waste repaired. But whenever all the pain is intirely removed, and there is no degree of hunger or appetite left, or when satiety succeeds, it is provided that eating should then become no pleasure at all : And if we continue eating still, the appetite is cloyed ; uneasiness and pain come on once more. This shews that the pleasure of eating, thus terminated at a certain point, is not absolutely a pleasure, but requires a proportionate pain to constitute it a pleasure, to this point : And when the pain quite ceases, it is no longer a pleasure.

2. The facts being thus established, let us attempt to give a philosophical account of them. The body is but a machine, the organ or instrument of something that moves and manages it. This, we may be sure, is true, whether we suppose the soul material or immaterial. Be that supposition what it will, it is certain there is something within us, which has power to wield, or act upon the parts of the body. Whatever that thing be, we know that it exerts this power, sometimes with greater, sometimes with less difficulty. Again, we know that there is something in us, that is moved and wielded, and which gives more or less trouble to the moving principle, according to the order, or indisposition, in which we find it. Thus far we pronounce with certainty from our own

own feelings, which are plain and determinate in this case. Or if any fanciful sophist presumes to deny this, and say, that no indisposition about him ever impedes the exertion of this moving principle, let him try, if it be as easy to him to walk twenty miles in a minute, as twenty paces. If he can declare, with truth, that his corporeal part is always obedient to his will, without giving him the least trouble; let us congratulate him upon this peculiar felicity, and allow him to have nothing to do with the argument: But if ever he should fall from these happy circumstances, it may then be worth his while to attend to it. In the *Inquiry into the nature of the Human Soul*, already printed, it is shewn at large, by a great variety of proofs, that there is an immaterial substance within us, which is the cause of a great deal of that motion, which is excited in the body, as all the rest is the effect of the Supreme First Cause: And there those powers, which are more particularly called the natural powers of matter, such as gravity, elasticity, cohesion, &c. are particularly inquired into. Having represented the body here as the organ only of something, that manages and works upon it, let me be permitted to refer the reader to that treatise for a proof of the immaterial nature of that spiritual substance, which acts upon the body as a machine. The use I mean to make of this observation, in the present argument concerning the

pleasures of the body, is no more than this: That since the body is but an instrument, or machine, all and every part of which is a thing moved, and not moving, the greatest perfection it is capable of, is to be in exact order and repair, free from indisposition, and fit to be used, or such as not to affect the agent with any trouble or pain in using it. For if we suppose it capable to do more, or to facilitate the use of itself, and by it's own motion to forward the thing intended, we form a supposition inconsistent with the nature of body, or what really amounts to a contradiction. It is quite consonant to reason to expect that the living principle must almost perpetually meet with some difficulty, more or less, in managing machines, such as our bodies are. It's necessary union with them, when out of order, is the immediate cause of this difficulty, or pain. From this consideration appears at one glance the conclusion we may fairly draw concerning the pleasures of the body: That they consist in having the disorder of it rectified, and the unsuitness to be used as an instrument removed; so that the agent may feel as little difficulty, or uneasiness in moving it, or acting by it as may be: Or in one word, that they consist in the alleviation only of that pain, which the body is ordained to give our living part by successive wearing, waste, or want of repair. If the soul felt as little difficulty in acting by it's bodily instrument,

as it now feels in simply willing the production of the action, it would feel no bodily pain, nor pleasure at all. It's pain and pleasure would be purely spiritual.

3. Let us now apply this observation more particularly to the pleasure of eating. It proceeds from a salutary previous pain. So far at least we may determine with certainty, whatever be the immediate cause of that pain.—“*Ce dissolvant*, (says the arch-bishop of Cambray,) *qui piquote l'estomac*, *luy prepare, parce ce méfaise, un plaisir tres vif lorsqu'il est appaisé par les alimens.* *Alors l'homme se remplit délicieusement d'une matiere estrangere, qui luy feroit borreur, s'il la pouvoit voir, dès qu'elle est introduite dans son estomac, & qui luy deplait même, quand il la voit, étant déjà rassasié.*—Fenelon, Existence de Dieu, c. 35. “*Vera causa famis*, (says Borelli,) *est mor-dicatio tunicarum & nervulorum ventri-culi.*—De mot. animal. p. 2. prop. 202.--

Whether hunger be owing to the dry attrition of the coats of the stomach, or the sharpness of this acid juice, discharged from the excretory ducts of certain glands, about the stomach, which vellicate it's fibres, it is equally certain, that our greatest pleasure in eating, is from the removal of this uneasy sensation. The mitigation of this uneasiness will be always pleasant, only in exact proportion to the degree, in which the pain of it was grievous: And whenever all the pain,

or uneasiness is entirely removed, when the fainter sensation of appetite, or the stronger of hunger is no longer perceived, the sated appetite is no longer susceptible of pleasure. It is cloyed, and again the stomach becomes uneasy, if we continue eating still.

4. We must here also apply these remarks, to our repeated assertion of the superior excellency of the pleasure of knowledge and the contemplation of truth. There is, we see, a certain point, at which the pleasure of eating, speedily and necessarily, terminates. Compare this to the delight and satisfaction resulting from the improvement of the rational nature, and the acting according to it's dictates. There is no point, beyond which these are not pleasant, no stated limits, where they become full; and beyond which they degenerate into pain.—Pause here a moment.—Art thou not struck, O sceptic, at the sense of these different affections of thy soul and body? Art thou still ambitious to degrade the dignity of the superior part of thy constitution, and sink thy spiritual, in thy material nature? Thy body, with respect to which, thou art in truth a mere *machine*, (to use a familiar phrase of thine, in the strict propriety of the term,) is out of order, and affects thee with pain, when thy omnipotent agent, *Chance*, has exhausted the matter necessary to make it go right. The only pleasure thou canst now be affected with, consists in feeling

ing the supply of a due quantity of this reparative matter, or the rectification of that disorder, by the wise œconomy of nature, or the lucky operation of thy blind deity. Exert for once thy nobler faculty of reflection and reason to a good purpose. Is the same scanty limit fixed by nature to the gratification of the rational appetite? Ought not this to afford thee ample conviction, that the percipient of spiritual pleasure, in whom this appetite and faculty is found, is something different from thy material substance, and of a nature transcendently superior to it? No quantity of rational pleasures is too much, or even enough for it. It would always relish, always pursue them, if its organical machine did not frequently call it's attention off, to keep it in repair. Thou tellest me, with a sneer, these airy unsubstantial pleasures affect not thee. No--- they affect not thy body; yet they affect the man. If thy mass be all material, nothing that cannot affect matter, can affect thee. An estimate has been laid before thee, of the stinted gratification thou canst derive from the addition or arrangement of the parts of thy wasting frame? Is that thy utmost wish? Farewell. May the miraculous interposition of the Almighty Father of light and reason work thy conversion!

5. The plain matter of fact has been here stated, without force or straining. What will the frivolous objector still be starting

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in opposition to it? He will say that the limits of the gratification of hunger, are not so precisely determined: And the same he may urge with equal propriety concerning all other sensual appetites. They are not, he adds, like a mathematical line, but admit of latitude, so that there may be still some pleasure in gratifying them, after the importunate cravings of the appetite, or all the pain, is quite removed. He triumphs now in finding a flaw in the former estimate, in producing an instance where all the pleasure does not absolutely and solely consist in the removal of pain. For here is positive clear pleasure, after all the pain is allayed. Not to maintain a dispute about small matters, let us allow that in a little degree, and for a short time, this may sometimes be the case. But from the judgment of our present opponents, men commonly given up to the dominion of strong sensual appetite, let us appeal to the experience of men of calm reflection, or to these abandoned sensualists themselves, when blessed by the singular favour of providence, with a portion of considerate and sober recollection. Will they not ingenuously confess it would be always happier and better to stop at the nearest limit, where it can with propriety be said that the appetite is satisfied? Not to contend about so poor a business, let us only bid them compute, what this boasted surplus of pleasure is worth, and how long it can continue,

tinue. We may take off the pain of hunger in a few minutes. How many more could we continue eating, without incurring a contrary pain? The pain of a cloyed appetite we shall find to be tenfold that of a craving one. The bodily machine is more apt to be disordered by throwing in too much, than too little of this reparative matter. If a failure of supply may make it languid, and unfit, through weakness, to execute the commands of the governing spirit, an overplus oppresses, and renders it more unwieldy and unmanageable. It requires time, before a lamp shall go out, for want of oil, but it may be drowned out, by too much, in an instant. No approved physician ever wrote, or spoke upon this subject, without insisting that it is better to stop at the nearest limit, where it can be said, with propriety, that the appetite is satisfied, and expatiating upon the dangers, arising from our going on to the farthest. The lightness and agility we feel in our limbs, the aptness for exercise, of body or mind, after a moderate meal, points out plainly where to stop; as does the cumbrous heaviness of the body, after a full one, and the wretched stupidity succeeding it, when

“The soul subsides, and wickedly inclines

“To seem but mortal, &c.”

POPE.

The drowsy torpor, which nature then kindly superinduces, is only a gentle hint, that it requires

requires leisure to work off the load, with which we have imprudently overcharged her. It is an excellent rule, which is laid down by Isocrates with respect to all exercises of the body, that to preserve health, "we should leave off, while we could yet take more." (e) Yet this is, more properly, a rule in the present case, with respect to indulging the pleasures of the body; and we may say, with greater truth, that we shall preserve health, if we discontinue our gratification of the sensual appetite, at a point, in which we could yet gratify it farther. This is but prudently denying ourselves a poor, weak pleasure, which momentarily decays, and is attended with far greater pain, disgust and sickness. It will be difficult to give any better reason, why the poor labouring part of mankind, whom want obliges to observe this regimen, enjoy a greater share of health, and are, generally speaking, freer from bodily pain, than the rich and luxurious. Lucian takes advantage of the Pythagorean metempsychosis to make a dunghill cock describe to Micyllus, with great humour and spirit, the inconveniencies attendant upon the rich, the gout, hectic fevers, catarrhs, dropsies, &c. hatched and crawling in swarms amidst the luxuries of a

(e) Ἀσκή τῶν περὶ τὸ σῶμα γυμνασίων, μὴτὰ περὶ τὴν ῥώμην, ἀλλὰ τὰ περὶ τὴν ὑγίαν συμφορέντα· τίτι δ' ἀν ἐπιτυχάνοις, εἰ λήγεις τῶν πόρων, ἔτι ποῶν δυνάμεθα.
Ad Demonium.

sumptuous table, and seizing unmercifully upon the crazy constitutions of the miserable guests. (f) The appetites of the labouring poor are perpetually in full vigour, and repair, partly indeed by regular returns of labour, and partly through their frugal diet; any excess in which they are likewise subject to rue, though in less proportion, hard exercise helping sooner, in them, to disencumber nature. How far pleasanter is their coarse and homely fare to the sharp call of nature, than all the delicacies, tortured with all the skill of a pernicious art, are to the wealthy. How sound, how refreshing their sleep, procured by toil, upon beds, that would disease and cripple the restless, enervated sons of luxury and excessive refinement. In a word, neither is their relish rendered intractably nice, nor their bodily frame unnaturally convulsed by disorders of their own seeking. By confining their pursuit to the satisfying the necessary calls of appetite, they seldom trespass, in a foolish desire of enjoying a greater share of sensual pleasure, than is consistent with the nature of body, in our present constitution. Infirm, and tottering, how comes that wretched libertine to be thus worn to decrepitude, in the very flower of his years?

(f) Ὅτι δὲ [πλεῖστοι] ὑπὸ ἀνεξαρτίας ἀθλοῖσι τινῶν κακῶν
ἢ ἔχουσι; ποδ' ἀγέας, καὶ φθοῖας, καὶ περιπνευμονίας, καὶ ὑδῆ-
ρως ταῦτα γὰρ τῶν πολυτελεῶν ἐκείνων δάπτων ἀπόγονα.

Luc. Somnium sive Gallus.

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It is by a continued course of varied pain, of mortification more severe than that of the saddest Chartreux, or monk of la Trappe. It is by pursuing bodily pleasure, beyond necessity, and its original design. But you are pointing to that hardier child of riot, almost grown hoary in debauchery and intemperance.---True; his robust constitution seems to brave the depredations of luxury and excess, even upon the verge of three-score. But besides the thousand, and ten thousand incidental pangs and twinges, both of body and mind, the decays and infirmities, which are now actually, and will soon be visibly coming on, with intenser torments, from the natural strength of his frame, which would otherwise have protracted these decays, for many years longer, must exhibit a wretched example in him, that nature will not permit her laws to be transgressed with impunity. Her prime law is, that we should obey the voice of reason, which was given us, that we should bridle-in the exorbitancies of the sensual appetites. These always infer a certain proportion of injury and pain, and it is precisely upon that account, that reason sets itself in constant opposition to them. Health is the great foundation of all bodily pleasure. But health, in spite of appearances, which can deceive us, only for a very short season, is necessarily impaired, and destroyed by intemperance. So that even this apparently vigorous old sensualist will
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be found to have unskilfully pursued bodily pleasure, without reckoning the disgrace, and detriment he has brought upon the nobler part of his nature. Yet how inferior, how contemptible are the gratifications of sense, if compared with those of the rational nature? These he has suspended, impaired, almost annihilated by his brutal gluttony; but these are what dignify, and indeed properly denominate the man: In slighting these, he degrades his nature, he forfeits his title to humanity. "The wise man, (says Hierocles,) does not concern himself simply about the body, but so far only about the body, as it may be serviceable, to execute the commands of the soul." (g)---But this consideration apart, it appears, in short, that speaking with absolute strictness, and according to the nature of things, we may say that the bounds of bodily pleasure admit of little or no latitude, any more than the exact equilibrium of a balance admits of adding to, or taking from either of the scales. In both cases, every the least addition has it's own weight, though it may sometimes be so little, as to be scarcely worth our wasting breath about it. This must be so, if the body be a proper and true machine, where every part has it's just and due proportion. If a deficiency, on the one

(g) 'Ου γὰρ σώματι ἀπλῶς ἐπιμελεῖται [ὁ φιλόσοφος] ἀλλὰ.—Hieroc. pag. 182.

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hand, and an excess on the other be admitted, there must be a certain point, betwixt them, which is neither, on either side of which, is an extreme, displeasing and injurious, more or less, to nature. It is not said that every transgression of this limit, every departure from this indivisible line were a fault. It is but by great accident that we can ever hit on it precisely. But since any perceptible transgression is a proportionable pain, or incommodes the machine in some degree; and since a faculty is not given us to adjust this matter to an exact nicety; the sage rule of Isocrates should still take place, that we may err on the safe side at least. It is better to fall short a little than to exceed. Some time after we think we have eaten but enough, we find we have eaten too much, and are heavy and disordered with it. But be it noticed here, that had nature given us a faculty of discerning the precise limit, it might often have been to no purpose. An exact equilibrium cannot be preserved in such a machine as the human body, for any considerable time. To have kept it exact, would have required an incessant attendance, and almost momentary addition proportioned to it's constant secretion of something; which would have been inconsistent with the attention, it is required to give to a variety of other business. A lamp may feed itself pretty equally: But this was not to be a condition of the animal body.

6. The same kind of reasoning is applicable to the pleasure of drinking, and with proper accommodation, nearly to every other bodily pleasure. But even in noticing the difference, and particularities of each, some repetitions of what has been said, will be requisite, and appear to need excuse. It will be said that the experience of every man is against me, with respect to the pleasure in drinking, of which a clear unmixed portion is perceptible, after all the pain of thirst is quite removed; that every man in this point is the only judge for himself; that it would not be so generally practised, if men found not a balance of pleasure in favour of this excess. Against so common a prepossession it might appear presumptuous to contend, if experience taught us that men usually judge so right for themselves, as not to be deceived with a shew of false pleasure, or not to incur real pain, by the pursuit, in this, and other like instances. We have already seen that, since the body is a machine, whose motions are all (it's voluntary motions not excepted,) performed according to the stated laws of mechanism, the proportion between its parts, and the regularity of it's motions, is of course impaired by excess, in a certain degree. Under different quantities of this reparative matter, drink, the animal œconomy cannot proceed with the same, or an equal degree of regularity, any more than a well-going clock will yet go exactly true, though something be added to the weight,
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and still go aright though something be taken from it. Let me ask this objector, whether it be absolutely a contradiction in the nature of things, that the power should be too great for the weight to be moved; so that the motion should become over violent for the end and design of it? We may conceive, and without much difficulty contrive a machine, where the motion shall be so rapid, as to set the whole on fire. There is, in all such cases, a propriety to be observed, according to the nature and design of the motion to be excited, in which precisely consists what is right. A strong constitution may apparently suffer nothing, or exhibit no remarkable disorder, from a little excess in drinking: As the equilibrium, in a large beam, loaded with great weights, at each end, may not be sensibly broken by every slight addition, yet properly speaking, it is demonstrably certain, that there is but one determinate quantity of weight, in the one balance, that can exactly counterpoise that in the other. The physician forbids his patient any of this sort of pleasure, because one whose circumstances of health, or the texture of whose frame is delicate, could less bear the disorder, which ensues from a compliance with the prevailing laws of good fellowship, than another who is easily quit for a few hours of a trifling head-ach, and in whom nature appears to have quite restored herself with a little sleep. A disorder there is, in either case, which we feel

more or less, as our constitution is able to bear it.

7. It is by custom alone, and habit, acquired with some difficulty and pain, that we become pleased with spirituous or fermented liquors, which have no natural aptitude in them to gratify the palate. They are at first unpleasant to all men, as is plain from every infant's refusing to taste them. It is habit, that raises a factitious appetite, that provokes a demand, which appears to be the call of a second nature. And this call, when it is not answered, becomes like a real natural appetite, painful: And in taking off this pain consists the pleasure. Nature is thus made to run in a by-channel, and will not be carried back to its first course again, without some force. Is not here a manifest trick that we put upon ourselves? It is in truth one of the most unskilful tricks imaginable. We provoke the pleasure only by provoking the appetite, or want; that is, by provoking the previous pain. The deceit is not the less foolish and hurtful, because we do not, or will not observe it. We fancy we increase the number of our pleasures, and are silly enough to forget, that, at the same time, we equally increase the number of our pains. And it must be so. For if nature has not fitted us for any of these pleasures, by giving us a natural call for it, or uneasiness in the want of it, we are under a natural

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tural incapacity of tasting that pleasure, unless by some unlucky art we can procure ourselves the want of it: And this can only be done by contracting some new, and unnatural habit. By this means indeed we may cunningly contrive to increase our wants, without number, and without end. We have already gone, and are daily advancing astonishing lengths at this work: For luxury has a dextrous knack at increasing our pains, for the acquisition of some new pleasure. Let us bestow, at our leisure, a little cool reflection upon this matter. We may rack our invention for new and various refinements without bounds: What is it all, but a most unwise, and unsuccessful struggle against the nature of things; a vain, and vexatious attempt to produce an effect, in opposition to the will of the Supreme First-Cause? And the consequence is just what might be expected. We may increase our pains at will: But we must not hope to have the pleasure of feeling them all taken off again. We may as well imagine that we can increase our wealth, by increasing our expences. We must retrench these, if we exceed the bounds of our income; or we shall not long be able to answer them all. Even Lucretius, (and surely his testimony may be allowed some weight in the case, the professed rule of whose life was present pleasure,) even he could say:

“ *Ergo*

" *Ergo hominum genus incassum frustra laborat,*

" *Semper et in curis consumit inanibus ævum :*

" *Nimirum, quia non cognovit, quæ sit habendi*

" *Finis, & omnino quoad crescat vera voluptas."*

Lucr. lib. 5. v. 1429.

Cast an eye on one hand, upon the bustle, toil, and hurry of the numerous and various artificers, in rich and populous cities ; what art, what invention is employed continually, towards attaining this sole end of increasing the pleasures above the pains of sense ? Yet how disproportionate is the effect of all these complicated, and mighty efforts ? Observe now, on the other hand, by how compendious a method, without any application at all, farther than following the plain dictates of nature, the poorer sort attain the same end, more effectually, and find the gratifications of sense far sweeter, in general, than the rich, and luxurious. You have thus before your eyes an experimental argument, that enhancing bodily pleasure, beyond the call of natural want, is only adding to the balance of pain. The gout, in the fable, found she mistook her lodging, when she stumbled into the cottage of the peasant ; and flying, took up her residence in the seat of his voluptuous lord.

8. But it will still be urged, that generous liquors restore the languishing spirits, drive away care, exhilarate the mind, inspire courage, eloquence, &c. This is unwarily strengthening the assertion against which the

objection is raised. For what is all this, upon examination, but to maintain,---that drinking a liberal portion of these liquors is pleasant so far only, as it proves a remedy to some evil, which is the point contended for? It has the virtue, it seems, of correcting various ineptitudes in the body, and some indispositions in the mind, arising in part from these. Generous liquors may indeed be of some service, occasionally, in removing these inconveniencies, with a discreet regard to the time, method, and proportion of using them. The relief, they afford us, is prompt. They do not cost nature the pains and time to digest, which eating does. What we drink is forthwith incorporated with the blood, and conveyed to the heart; and all along, as it proceeds, it braces the lax, and quickens the sensibility of the torpid parts: It restores a fresh aptitude to the whole machine, by a supply of matter proper to make it's motions light and easy. The refreshment, ease, and recruit of spirits, we feel from drink being thus more immediate, than what we find from meat; and its transit to the heart, and ascent from thence to the brain, more rapid; the sentient part residing there had need to be strictly on the watch, lest the afflux to these parts be too brisk. If long continued, it raises such a commotion and hurry in that confined region, as renders every thing unstable, and intractable to the governing mind. The will finds the poise,
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and wielding of it's materials, so different from what it used to be, that it can manage them no longer, after the accustomed regular manner, than a printer could dispose, and set in order his types, if something kept them continually jumbled about. Discretion and foresight being then driven far away, conceit and rashness are mistaken for courage, the sallies of impertinence from a tongue, restrained by modesty before, are construed into a strange flow of eloquence. The dull spirits, which a moderate glass had exhilarated, are now exalted into frenzy. The eyes, by their outward appearance, discover sufficiently that the mind within, as well as the optic organs, are sore affected. It is then probably owing to the disorder chiefly of the optic nerves, that the center of gravity in the body, or at least the government of it is lost. (*b*) What an odious spectacle is exhibited by a rational being thus disguised? So unblest is the inordinate cup of that wretch, who (*i*) "lets in a fiend at his mouth, to steal away his brains."

(*b*) Other causes may be assigned: But this appears to be a principal one. Children whirling round, till the room and ambient bodies seem to turn the same way, can no longer stand upon their legs. As we gradually acquire an habitual management of the center of gravity of the body, in standing or moving, so it seems chiefly to be with respect to the apparent distance and stability of the surrounding objects, at least in those, who are not born blind. A vertigo makes us lose it for a short time, sailing in a ship for a longer, or till we acquire a new habit.

(*i*) Shakespear.

9. The consideration urged before, that we have not only bodies, but rational souls, to take charge and concern about, ought, in the present instance, to be enforced with more particular caution, than in the article of eating? For this reason, (says Hierocles,) Pythagoras, in that measure he prescribes to temperance, "attends first to drink, before meat, knowing that here, that measure is not so easily observed;" and a greater, and more sudden disturbance is raised in the intelligent spirit, than in the other kind of intemperance. If by eating too much, we encumber and stupify the rational faculty, and are degraded thus below the overfed swine, who have no such faculty; we may drink till we are mad, and become infernal agents of all manner of mischief.

10. As to the bodily pleasures of rest, and sleep, it is plain, at first sight, that though exceedingly pleasant, they are only so, as they alleviate pain. They have therefore nothing positive in them; being only a cessation from fatigue, and watching; which nature admits, in order to recruit her powers, and so prepare us for a renewal of toil. (*k*) With sleep, our bodies are not only refresh-

(*k*) Videmus enim, quod à somno reficimur, & nutritur; at à continuâ vigeliâ, cibo non deficiente debilitamur, flaccefcimus, excarnes reddimur. Borrell. de mot. Animal. Prop. 162.

ed, but nourished; and without it, though food be plentifully supplied, they languish and decay. Again, after the due reparations are made, by the intermission of labour, and fatigue, if we are still confined to rest, or restrained from exercise, the restraint, or rest itself, would become painful, and what before was pain, would become pleasure. (1) So true it is, that all our attempts to do more than remove bodily pain only lead us to incur a contrary pain.

II. An obvious remark will not fail to strike us here, unfavourable to the notion of the prevalence of happiness above misery, in this period of our existence. Sleep is a natural deliquium of the soul, a kind of death, or non-existence, which it falls into successively at stated intervals. In sleep, the body appears totally unfit or indisposed either to affect, or be affected by the soul. It is left in a state purely vegetative; and it's mechanism seems to rectify itself, by it's own established laws, or the laws and operation of the Supreme all-governing Spirit. Under these circumstances the soul appears shut up in a dark inaccessible cell, utterly incapable of wielding the cumbrous burthen, it bore about with it, when awake; which

(1) *Sessio, & omnimoda corporis nostri quies, & inertia diù continuata vires non reficit, nec jucunda est; sed è contra languorem & dolorificum torporem effert, cujus medela est motus, et corporis agitatio.*

Borelli. Prop. 162.

overwhelms it now, and excludes all notices of external objects from it. Thus it fares with the soul in sleep, at least when we do not dream, (*m*) if that be ever the case: And if it has any consciousness then, which is not easy to determine, it is the same thing to the man, or whole compound being, whether it has, or not, since no vestige is left of that consciousness, when it comes to rights again, or awakening, reassumes it's former functions. For, by Prop. 3. of Sect. II. it cannot with propriety be called the same *conscious* being with that which actuates the body, until some revolution, or renovation of existence, shall revive all that dark part, or vacancy of being in us. Notwithstanding this, do we not covet in numberless cases, and eagerly embrace this state of non-existence, this short annihilation? How do we think ourselves obliged to the power of medicine, that can strip us for a while of life and perceptivity; throw us out of existence, with respect to the sense of pain, when a fit of some acute distemper is upon us? Let care possess the soul, ignominy depress, or grief prey upon it, how does it fly for shelter from reflection to a state of unconscious being! How do the poets, of all ages and nations, celebrate this

(*m*) And when we dream, we seem brought into a different species of existence, wherein we act a part, very imperfectly related to our compound state of being.

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state, with every complimentary epithet, and the most affecting strains of panegyrics they can bestow ! Now let us consider that, though we cannot but love and desire existence, yet the condition of our present being is such, that one third part of it is necessarily passed in periodical and temporary stages of a sort of non-existence, and for a great portion of the other parts, we are often reduced to such streights, that we esteem this unconsciousness, or temporary death, our greatest happiness, and are frequently induced to procure it to ourselves by the help of art. What stronger proof, what more open confession of the soul can we require, that, though it be in love with existence, desirous of happiness, and conscious it was born for it, this short period is not, cannot be the natural and proper boundary of its desires ? I wish the world would pay a just attention to this point, that some sage, of a clear and comprehensive judgment, would duly solve, and draw the proper conclusion from this important problem, this astonishing appearance in the rational nature ; and tell us why, notwithstanding our miserable state at present, we are still so incorrigibly in love with existence. In the mean time let us rest on this never-failing anchor of our hope.— There is, there must be, in the nature of things, an absolute and eternal reason, a necessary and indefeasible principle of wisdom

dom and goodness. The right solution of the strange appearance that perplexed us before, will be found to follow of course from this proposition; and lead us to a truth, of more importance to us, than all the rest besides. It were much too little to say of this investigation, that it would be more serviceable to mankind, than that of the catenarian curve, or that of the swiftest descent, the quadrature of the circle, or the perpetual motion, the transmutation of metals, the longitude, or even the universal panacæa.

12. That in the next instance of warmth, or cold, we have no pleasure, without previously feeling the analogous pain, is obvious. A supply of gentle, gradual heat is an exceeding great relief and comfort to a body chilled with cold; but the opposite unpleasant sensation must first be felt, before we become susceptible of that comfort. As in the mitigation of the pain consists the pleasure, so the relief afforded by warmth is precisely equal, or bears exact proportion to the degree of pain it removes. If the balance of pain still preponderates, it admits an equal proportion of pleasure still, to bring them to an equilibrium. But by the least addition on either side, the equilibrium is again destroyed. And when destroyed, in this instance particularly, it is always on the side of pain, and at the instant we make the pleasant scale preponderate, it becomes the painful one: And

this increases, through all degrees, with the intenseness of the heat, till we pant anew for the refreshment of cold, and become sensible that the way to be rightly affected is to feel neither, and that indolence, after all, or the absence, both of the pleasure and the pain, if attainable, would be the most desirable state.

13. There is another bodily pleasure yet remaining to be considered, upon which I chuse not to expatiate, leaving the reflection of the reader, at his leisure, to apply to it such parts of the foregoing reasoning, with respect to other pleasures, as he will not fail to find most properly applicable to it. It is expressed, in latin, by the same word, that denotes likewise a certain troublesome cutaneous distemper, the uneasiness of which, and the pleasure attached to the use of the natural means of alleviating that uneasiness, has been probably accounted somewhat analogous to the pain and pleasure in question. Whatever is pleasant in both, is only in proportion to a previous pain. The uneasiness indeed of a prurigo is different from that of a wound or a bruise. But all pains are not alike, any more than all pleasures. If it had been proper to be more particular on this subject, it would have been easy to shew that the state of some men, and of most brute animals, seized by the fury of this fierce appetite, is plainly a state of uneasiness.

easiness and pain. (n) May not this obvious reason be given, why the more decent and modest half of our species will not allow the present instance to be pleasant in any degree, as they are forbid, by shame, to own the restraint from a removal of the pain to be uneasy? But enough of this, considered as a mere affection of the body. So far as mind and sentiment mingle with it, the present question is not at all concerned.

14. It were arrant trifling, to mention the mere bodily pleasure, perceived by the senses of seeing, hearing, smelling, as affording any considerable portion of pure pleasure: I say considerable, for here again, as before, I would fain avoid disputing about trifles. The affections indeed of the eye and the ear minister to the mind an occasion of tasting some exquisite and refined pleasures. But he has bestowed little attention upon the subject, who does not know that these are mental pleasures, arising from reflection, or the exercise of our faculty of imagination. The power of receiving these higher and more delightful perceptions of beauty, order, harmony, proportion, is a natural

(n) Τὰ σμῆνα γὰρ ταῦτα, οἱ στεναγμοί, καὶ τὰ δάκρυα, καὶ τὸ ὀχρὸν ἵασι, καὶ ἄλλαι τῆς ἡρώτου εἰσιν. Lucian. Jup. Trag. Are these sighs, and tears, and this wan complexion, or the failure of speech, sight, hearing, the feverish heats, and cold sweats, the paleness, tremblings, faintings, in Sappho's admirably descriptive ode, are these the tokens of true delight, of pure enjoyment?

power, but much improved by a cultivation of taste. It has not improperly been called an internal sense, it's affections being truly mental, and not bodily only. Our delicate sensations of pleasure, arising from a fine piece of painting, or music, can no more be reckoned merely organical, than those we might feel from the sight of an ingenious mathematical problem, the reading a beautiful passage in Homer's Iliad, or listening to the lively and flowing periods of an eloquent orator. Let any one of clear discernment, or a judgment formed by the habit of accurate and just thinking, examine well, and analyze with care, the pleasure he feels at the sight of a lovely countenance, an elegant building, picture, statue, a rich landscape, or garden, the rising or setting sun, a starry sky, or any of those objects, which, when presented to the eye of a man happily possessed of that internal sense, afford the highest entertainment, in the compass of art and nature; will he call that entertainment bodily pleasure? Again, while he listens to the natural music of the woods, or the most passionate compositions of art, while he hangs, with heart-felt rapture, on the delicate expression of a fine singer, or instrumental performer; let him tell us whether the seat of his pleasure, be his imagination, or the tympanum of his ear alone; and whether they do not raise in
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his mind a sense of gratifications purely intellectual, from images sweetly revived, and the recollection of sentiments and objects formerly affecting, dear and grateful to him. That we reckon these adventitious pleasures, of a sublimer cast, into our calculation of the pleasures of seeing and hearing, is obvious from hence, that brutes appear not to be susceptible of gratifications of this kind; and yet they are as capable of pleasure purely sensual, as men, though all reflection, or internal exercise of the mind, we are, by observation and analogy, compelled to deny them. The pleasures these senses afford us, as preventive of pain and misery, are merely negative, and immediately owing to reflection. Thus, it may be said, that sight was given us, to prevent the misery of blindness. But it is indispensably necessary to our existing at all, either pleasantly or painfully, in this period. For if mankind had been made a race of sightless animals, they must have perished miserably in a short time, not being able to direct themselves in the quest of any thing proper for the support of life. The case is the same with the sense of hearing. As by seeing a precipice we are admonished to avoid it, so by hearing of danger, we are taught to turn away from it. The pleasure of escaping the risque in both cases, arises from the previous horror we felt at the apprehension. Whatever hurtful things these senses help us to shun, and what-

whatever necessary things they help us to acquire, they can afford us no pleasure equal to the having stood in no need of the one, or been in no danger of the other. In short, that which makes us attribute so much pleasantness to these senses, is the considering the misery we should have been in without them. But to be free from misery, though even that is more than they can effect, is no positive happiness. It is, at best, but the state of inanimate beings, which are incapable of happiness, or misery.

15. Let not this representation of the emptiness of all sensual pleasures, abstracted from those of the mind, and our rational nature, be thought derogatory from the goodness and wisdom of God, in bestowing these senses upon us, and contriving so wonderfully to render them subservient to our security, and the supply of our wants. If properly considered, it rather shews an infinity of power and knowledge, that creatures compounded in part of matter, should be accommodated with such admirable resources, and means to render the union of spirit and matter tolerable. The description given of man, by Epictetus, and after him, by Marcus Antoninus, with a striking brevity, thus, "*a soul carrying about a dead carcass*" (o) is founded in truth. But I desire the design of all this

(o) Lib. iv. cap. 41.

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may be only understood to shew the low nature of all the pleasures, we are capable of perceiving from our material half alone; and that these, and all pleasures, not intellectual, or spiritual, are only negative, or alleviations of pain: And that an infinitely wise and good Being could not have designed the happiness of rational beings to consist in such pleasures, or have proposed them as the end of their existence.

16. What is become then of the pleasures of sense, of which we are so dotingly fond, that they appear to be the objects of almost all our thoughts and endeavours? In the pursuit of an empty appearance all this while, are we always doomed to embrace a substantial pain? From hence we may learn how grievously we are mistaken, if we presume to act against reason, the commanding part of our nature, yet vainly hope it is not impossible we may be gainers by the choice. We bring upon ourselves an unspeakable quantity of pain by this palpable mistake about bodily pleasure, while we fancy it is at our disposal; and that we may force it, by our endeavours, to any height we please. Our perverse disputes for the possession of a good, which no man ever enjoyed, nor ever will, fills the world with numberless calamities, to which we are not by nature necessarily subjected. Our contentions for wealth and power, which are solely referable to this end, all resemble, more or less,
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the ridiculous project before hinted of Pyrrhus, who being asked, upon the supposed success of all his toils, what he meant to do next? replied, *to sit down, rest, and be merry*; a mighty consistent purpose truly with that of being an universal monarch! And the success, alas! of every one, who attempts to undeceive us, is much of a piece with that of his friend, who by asking him, *why not sit down, and be merry with what he had already?* convinced indeed, but did not persuade him. (p) How plainly does experience point out the readiest way to enjoy as much of this pleasure as our present constitution will admit, not by endeavouring to force nature, but by complying with it's method, and waiting the call of appetite.

17. Here again, with hearts resigned, and minds obedient to the wise and beneficent laws of providence, let us reflect once more upon the superior nature of rational pleasures, when compared with the pleasures of the body. The pleasures of a spiritual and intellectual kind have no immediate concern with the modifications or affections of matter. They penetrate directly to the soul. Any of them may be equally grateful at the same time to every man, who is rightly disposed to receive it, and endlessly

(p) Νοήσαντα μὲν ὅσον ἀτέλιπεν εὐδαιμονίαν, ὃν δὲ ἀρί-
στον τὰς ἐλπίδας ἀφῆναι μὴ δυνάμενον. Plut. in Pyrrh.

grateful to all men. They never rise to loathing and aversion; yet are always capable of rising still higher. They owe not their consistence to the feeling of a previous pain; though the allaying that be often the additional advantage of pursuing them: But they prevent us with solid satisfaction, all perceived on the right side of indolence. Being designed by the Author of our nature to make it happy, they alone are sufficient for that end. They affect us not only, as individuals; but it is their peculiar excellency, that in pursuing our own private gratifications this way, we extend their happy influence to society in general. It appears, on the other hand, from the foregoing account, how gross a cheat men put upon themselves, when they perversely aim at forcing the pleasures of sense beyond the very scanty limit, which the demands of nature prescribe, infesting society at the same time, and introducing needless misery and disorder into the species.

18. This will conduct us into the track of reasoning, best adapted to justify the laws of God, with respect to bodily pleasure. So wisely has he ordered matters, that even when carried to the greatest height, which our present constitution will admit, it may be still consistent with the good order and welfare of society. It is only when our inordinate appetites seek to carry it to an impossible height, or to engross more of it

than our nature can receive, that we cross and interfere with each other. As creatures endued with freedom, we may abuse it: But it is so decreed by Providence, that in that case, we should of course incur a pain, where we propose a pleasure. It is a contradiction to suppose that a more proper, or more gently coercive method, could have been taken by divine goodness, with such an agent as man. It is the same wise restraint, effectually coercive upon us, as rational, yet consistent with our being free, which hems us in from unreasonable pursuits in other respects, less attended to. The superfluity scraped together by the rich, and stolen, in some degree, from the necessities of the poor, they can neither apply to their nature, nor even keep securely, without some pain.

19. Should we endeavour now to make some estimate of the excess of bodily pain, above bodily pleasure; as it is not possible to determine the difference precisely, so it is easy to show it must be very considerable, even upon the most advantageous supposition, that of uninterrupted health, or that which is commonly called, and understood to be such. For we must, at all times, experience an over-balance of bodily pain above pleasure, less or more, except in the instant, when by a lucky concurrence of accidents, more than our own discretion in listening to the dictates of nature, we are

brought to the exact equilibrium between these affections of pain, from want, or excess. If indeed the animal body were like a plant, which draws its nutritious juices out of the ground, and draws them only as it can properly digest them according to the uses of the vegetable œconomy, and draws them always, when it can do this, then this state of indolence might be more equable, constant, and lasting. But the case is quite otherwise in our present constitution. The bodily reparations are made by no unerring law: And depending upon us, they depend upon our ignorance, or our passions, especially since we emancipate ourselves from the government of reason. Even though we should adjust the precise quantity of reparative matter, at each requisite interval, to the greatest nicety, in which we frequently over and under-act, from luxury or necessity; it cannot be long before the fresh returning demands would upset the balance, and throw us out of this unpainful state. It must, from the nature of the thing, be almost perpetually in disorder, more or less, in a system of matter, which is in a continual flux. If then, upon the most advantageous conditions of existence in this present period, according to the constitution of body, which now obtains, we are still subjected to such a continual overplus of pain; how miserable must our existence be, if we take into the reckoning an ill state of health,
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with which we all must lay our account. Every country has it's diseases peculiar to the air and soil of it. Almost every particular family has it's proper indisposition; millions have grievous distempers propagated with the blood: Not to mention that different kinds of life, and occupation are liable to diseases of several kinds. Unknown and complicated maladies daily arise, from a particular concurrence of natural causes with new combinations of bodily habits: Commerce brings home the diseases of bodies mis-suited to foreign climates, together with those of the climates themselves: for every change of air has it's influence on machines so delicate as our bodies are. Inverted seasons, (as if all nature were vitiated in sympathy, or purposely to afflict us,) produce new disorders. The several periods of human life have infirmities peculiar to themselves. Let us consider the first stage of our existence. What is our infancy, but one continued infirmity, after a constant struggle between life and death? We are introduced at our very birth to a familiar acquaintance with pain, enduring tortures, which we cannot express: And as we urge our progress in life through innumerable ills, these are only varied, never entirely remitted; till old age brings us back to bodily infirmities equal to those of childhood, but much more afflictive to the mind; when the poor frail machine,

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losing all it's instrumental fitness, becomes daily more and more disordered, and soon falls to pieces. These ills are such as commonly happen to all men indiscriminately, the good and the bad, the sober as well as the intemperate, for I have purposely omitted the mention of diseases, which we bring upon ourselves by our own misconduct. In this partial, but not unfaithful sketch of the miseries of human life, the world exhibits a scene too like the lazaret-house presented to the eye of Adam, by the archangel in Milton; a sight which draws from the first of human race, this pathetic, but too hasty ejaculation; "*Better end here unborn.*"

20. Thus it appears, we at all times endure a clear unbalanced bodily pain, except at those short intervals, when the pain and pleasure barely poise each other; or when both are cancelled in sleep; though sleep itself is many times not unpainful. Let him, to whom this conclusion may appear harsh and ungrateful, add a little reflection to experience; and then reviewing the particulars above set down, prove it to be ill-grounded, if he can. Is not the continuance of every state a disease to him? Does he seek motion, but as rest becomes uneasy? Is not perfect indolence, or exemption from bodily indisposition of every sort, the rarest possession in the world? The being tied down to inform such frail machines, is itself a constant indisposition. But inured to
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act by them still, though generally out of order, we lose, in habitual pain, the very notion of indolence : And so fearful is our apprehension of grievous pains, that we reckon a mere immunity from these a desirable state, for which we are content to compound. Is not the body often indisposed, and the parts disordered, while yet we feel, or at least advert to, no pain ? This may appear a paradox, but the fact is undeniable. It may happen upon these two accounts. Either the attention is called away, and occupied upon some other perception ; or else we are hardened, and become familiar to this degree of pain. Being sensible of no change of bodily affection from what we ordinarily feel, we can acknowledge no sense of pain, though a person falling from a state of indolence to the state we are in, might complain, and be really afflicted at the uneasy change. By long habit, the very idea of a less painful state will gradually wear away : for in comparing the state of one minute with the former, we find no perceptible difference. So again, a greater pain will cancel a less, or drown the sense of it. A dangerous bruise, or fracture, will call away the attention from the pain of a cut finger : And to the most dreadful wound the hurry and agitation of a violent passion will often render a man quite insensible. From this last instance, by the way, a strong presumptive proof arises of two important

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truths: That the percipient within us is simple and one, since it can advert fully only to one thing at once: And that it is immaterial; since if it were material, every solicitation or affection of matter could not fail to affect it proportionally. It is observable, that in the intense application to study, or business, the less powerful sense of pain is altogether unheeded: though often then we drag about bodies, that incommode the thinking part exceedingly. It cannot act with that collectedness, or force, with that ease, or alacrity, with an indisposed organ, as it would with one, that were free from indisposition. The pain, that is not attended to, in this case, as effectually wastes the spirits, as if it were, and occasions the more dead weight to the agent. The student is far gone in a slow distemper, before he perceives that any thing ails him. In Lyncurgus's institution of the Spartan youth great care was taken to deaden the delicacy of sense; and some people we often see industriously hardening themselves to pain, and fatigue. But these shifts plainly confess how painful the union of such bodies, as ours, is to our other half; when we are forced to inure ourselves to pain, to prevent the sharper pang of a sudden change.

21. From this survey of the pains of sense, (in which many articles are designedly omitted, many unforeseen accidents, which suddenly overtake us, and of which every

every mortal is within the reach;) the grand question properly recurs—Why, if there be no period after the present, are we raised up to be inevitably miserable, and then sink back into nothing? The belief of this evidently contradicts that of the existence of an infinitely good Being, for which we have the fairest, fullest demonstration. And an equal certainty is consequent upon that demonstration, that such a Being could not raise up creatures to be inevitably, and finally miserable. Yet misery, it seems, is the unavoidable portion of creatures confined to perishable bodies, like our own. It is therefore certain that we shall be, and all those, who are already dead, still are, living and percipient beings after death, as it is certain that we have, and they had, bodies. This argument is clearly abstracted from the conduct of men, considered as moral agents. It proceeds only upon the principle, that an infinitely good Being could not have made it the condition of our existence, that we should endure pain gratis; or that we should be capable of no other pleasure, that might be an equivalent to this unbalanced pain, but such as necessarily supposes an after-state, rational pleasure, and that we should yet be destined to end our being here.

22. One caution it may be proper to add in this place. Though the union of our souls and bodies, in their present constitution, is said
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to produce a balance of pain to our percipient part; yet this is not to be understood universally, as if, in every possible constitution of body, the union of it must be painful to a living or spiritual being. Infinite power and wisdom are boundless in resources. They are not limited by any thing that is not a direct contradiction. It is indeed contradictory that matter should become a self-movent, and spontaneous thinking substance. Being necessarily a lifeless substance, it is not possible that the union of it to a living one should render it positively happy. But it is no contradiction that it should affect it with no pain. The animal œconomy may be quite altered. Our atmospherical air has a vital quality: It might have more of that quality. Meat, drink, and reparations might be needless even here. The body all over might be one sensorium. The very moving a lifeless substance might give a living being no trouble. But we have been speaking of things, as they actually are, and not as they possibly might be.

SECTION VI.

In every Condition of Life, from all external Circumstances taken together, Man is susceptible of more Pain than Pleasure.

PROPOSITION I.

EVERY other kind of Pleasure, excepting the Rational, or that which arises from the Improvement of the Mind, is merely negative,

I. HAVING seen that the pleasures of sense are but mitigations of pain, and therefore that man is not susceptible of so much bodily pleasure, as may nearly prove equivalent to balance the pain, which in his present constitution he must inevitably endure; we shall now find that all other kinds of pleasure, except the rational, are confined to the same narrow conditions, equally conversant about removing pain only, and very seldom effectual in removing it all. We may invent amusements, pastimes, recreations, diversions, (which very names are only expressive of contrivances to shift off a troublesome state of existence.) These will not mend the matter, if we are excluded from rational pleasure, and a future existence

ence of the soul is denied us. Upon this desperate supposition, we are, even in those respects, in a worse condition than the brutes. And the being made capable of access to these wretched palliatives is but the heightening our misery, and producing a second quantity of unbalanced pain, in addition to the former.

2. Man is a creature both social, and active. These two qualities produce an importunate appetite, a strong natural call to be answered. In a situation, where no object presents itself to allay the pain of this desire, or that excludes him alike from company, and business, it commonly becomes extremely uneasy to him. Hence it is, from these previous pains of solitude, and idleness, that the pleasure of being diverted from them becomes a possibility, or that we find any pleasure in diversions. To be satisfied of this, let any one advert to the confused and fatiguing huddle, or circle of thoughts, returning still, and forcing themselves, without satisfaction, or invitation, upon the mind; and the uneasiness and languor hence ensuing, when one is deprived of company, and has not the art of finding, or providing for himself something to do, when alone. The idle, or involuntary workings of a vacant brain, in solitude, are the most troublesome company. To a mind well prepared indeed, reflection, and rational pursuits afford a perpetual fund of
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entertainment, preventive, as it were, of solitude, even when alone. But scarce any thing will appear more irksome, and insupportable than the situation of a man, amply furnished with all the conveniences of life, without society, exercise, or the talent of procuring proper employment for his mind. To Crusoe, (or rather Selkirk, and Serrano) (q) the care in providing the necessaries of life afforded a relief, without which, life itself had become a burthen scarce tolerable. The very distress, which compelled him to fatiguing work, and tied down his attention continually, diverted his mind, in a great degree, from a more horrid uneasiness. The continual drudgery of the poor peasant, who labours for his bread, exempts him from a far more wretched languor, and fatigue of spirit. These mental pangs are sorely vexatious to those, who are placed above necessity, yet can find nothing to do. The seeking to get rid of time unskilfully is the nursery of the most immoral practices, among people of fashion: It betrays

(q) Alexander Selkirk, a Scotsman, lived four years and odd months, in the uninhabited island of Juan Fernandez, and came afterwards with captain Rogers to England, where he lived to an easy and chearful old age. See *Woodes Rogers's Cruising Voyage round the Globe, performed in the Ship, Duke and Dutchess, in the years 1709, 1710, 1711.* Peter Serrano lived three years alone on a desert Island, called by him Serrano, and afterwards four years with another person, shipwrecked on the same island. At his return to Europe, the Emperor settled a pension upon him for life. See the *Royal Commentaries of Peru* by *Garcilasso de la Vega*. b. i. ch. 3.

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them into many fatal miscarriages, gives them up a prey to the most despicable and vilest plunderers, and plunges them suddenly, with their eyes open, into obvious ruin.

3. Thus the painful want of something, to employ the activity of the soul, is the general incentive to diversion. We may now judge how far it can be called real, clear pleasure; and whether it can help greatly to make us happy, in the absence of rational pleasure. Since the pleasure of diversion arises from a previous pain, (the foreburthen of solitude, or the fatigue of idleness,) it must be allowed that it may be very great. But that it should be greater than the wretchedness, it is brought to remove, appears a contradiction. The conclusion here is fairly deduced. But it will be difficult to make him see it, who has lost sight of nature; who dreams of adventitious pleasures in diversions, felt only after a settled habit. It was the irksomeness of being alone, or inactive, which first proved the occasion of contracting this stronger habit. The habit but increases the impatience of solitude, and inactivity; and the pleasure it increases that way, is just as the pleasure of habitual drinking is acquired by the growing uneasiness of a factitious call. To be satisfied that the pleasure of diversions arises originally from a relief of the pains and penalties of inactivity, let us consider that early age, in which we discover,
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with greatest ease and certainty, the tendencies of human nature. Unfit, in our childhood, for any serious business, what shifts and contrivances do we not fall upon to be what we then call busy? It is the severest discipline to confine these little creatures to the same place, and compel them to do nothing, or not to exert the activity of their nature. From the anguish they never fail to express, upon the occasion, by their cries, their looks, their gestures, it appears that the pleasure of diversion springs originally from some importunate affection within ourselves, and not from any particular congruity between the thing we are doing, and our nature, or habits. For in that age, as we have contracted no habits, it is only the being busy that is sought after, without regard to any particular kind of occupation. We often hear of the distressful shifts, to which men under confinement are reduced, to beguile away their time; as scattering pins on the floor of a dungeon, gathering them up again, placing them in order, and varying their position continually. In this case the pleasure of a precontracted habit will certainly not be alledged.

4. But there is another cause assigned, which makes diversion pleasant: When it is indulged, not simply as an expedient to deceive the time, but as an intermission from the fatigue of business, or as a means to divert the attention, when we labour under some indisposition of body or mind. Thus

Herodotus

Herodotus relates that the Lydians, in the time of a long famine, invented variety of diversions, afterwards used by the Grecians, to beguile the sense of hunger. (r) In the latter case, the previous pain is confessed. In the former, if business, or employment be supposed at any time not at all disagreeable to us, diversion from it will be no longer regarded as a relief or pleasure. It will rather become unpleasant, and unwelcome to us. Necessary business, it is true, including the idea of coercion, and abridgment of our liberty, is commonly uneasy to us. And from this ideal cause of disgust we often see persons fly for refuge to a toilsome recreation; and soon after, we see them driven to seek relief from the fatigue of one diversion, in the wearisome variety of a succession of new ones: just as a pampered appetite seeks still to sooth a pain, it fondly perpetuates, by a variety of dainties, thus striving to alleviate the surcharge of nature, by laying on still another, and another load. In both cases we disease ourselves with what, by nature, can be pleasant only as the relief of a disease. In this article of diversion then, we are manifestly losers upon the whole. We call it a pastime, not undeservedly, being literally a passing of time, and nothing more. But is it not rather a losing of time? It certainly must be so, if time was allowed

(r) Ἐξευρεθῆναι δὴ τότε καὶ τῶν κύβων, καὶ τῶν ἀστραγάλων, καὶ τῆς σφαίρης, καὶ ἄλλων πασίων παιγνίων τὰ ἡμέτερα, πλὴν πτωχῶν. Herod. Lib. i. Cap. 94.

us here for any other end, than to be a load and torment to us. It may indeed be the properest way to pass our time, if at death we become nothing. It may be fit to beguile a being thus wretched, and un-consequential. But mark that it is this gloomy supposition only, that can render a continued round of diversions proper, or not disgraceful to a rational being.

5. Recreations, it is confessed, are not only allowable, but sometimes even very expedient. All that is intended here, is to shew that the pleasure they afford, arising merely from the alleviation of some uneasiness, can never be clear unbalanced pleasure on the right side of indolence. There seems indeed, in some cases, to be a real demand for them, in the nature of man, through a feebleness and indisposition, arising from the material part of his constitution, which renders it uneasy to him to be long conversant about one thing, even rational pursuits; though these be his only source of pure delight, and not indebted for the satisfaction they afford to any previous pain. Nothing but the want of right reason could ever make them unpleasant to us, if a long or intense application to the improvement of the mind did not often greatly disorder our bodily frame. No part of the material organ can be long tractable, and fit for use, without reparation. It is the disadvantage of our present union to a body so constituted, which

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renders relaxation from our most serious pursuits as necessary sometimes as rest, sleep, and nourishment. It was not designed, it seems, by the Author of our nature, that in this short period of discipline, and probation, all our time should be solidly our own. Recreation thus becomes in some degree necessary; but not more of it than will answer the end. We daily see it miserably misapplied; and that they indulge it most, who want it least. Happy is he, as well as deserving of the truest praise, who has found out the art of making one rational employment succeed as a recreation, and relief to another.

PROPOSITION II.

FROM every imaginable Combination of the external Circumstances of Things in this World, Man necessarily feels an over-balance of Pain.

I. As in stating the balance of pain above pleasure in human life, we have all along expressly excepted the higher, and more valuable pleasures of our moral and rational nature: So it may be proper here to exclude from the account the pains, with which we mutually affect each other by our folly and vice. Let us then first institute the argument upon the supposition, that all mankind were such as they are described to have

been in the golden age of the world, as perfectly free from guilt, or blame as it is possible to conceive them. That we may make the supposition as favourable as may be on the side of pleasure, let us farther imagine that the earth, of it's own accord, produced to these innocent inhabitants all the necessities, and comforts of life: that the seasons were such as they are represented to have been, not liable to these violent extremes, and sudden changes, but mild, and equable, and that all men had as little trouble in making provision for any thing about the body, as children, to whom a supply of all it's wants is provided by the care of parents: Or if there be any more consistent, or more advantageous condition possible to be imagined in the nature of things, let that be supposed to take place, the present constitution of body and mind only remaining the same, and the consideration of rational pleasures being laid aside. (s)

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(s) Be it permitted here to insert a copious description of the inhabitants of the South parts of California, from captain Shelvocke's voyage round the world; because it realizes, in some degree, the supposition here made, which otherwise might appear chimerical; and because this account may serve in part to disabuse those, who in fancy people all distant parts of the world with savages and monsters. The reflections it will suggest to men of serious thought will induce them to excuse it's length. Before he comes to give the character of this people, he spends some pages in an account of his landing, and the manner, in which his ship's crew were relieved of a great

2. This supposition will be found of some use in forming a right estimate of those things

great part of the fatigue of wooding and watering by their kind assistance—that they invited him by signs and courteous gestures, and fires on the tops of rocks upon the sea-shore, to come to land—that an universal joy seemed spread through the whole people on his arrival---that he entered Puerto Seguro surrounded with numerous embarkations of Indians on their bark-logs--that their king, or chief, in token of desire to do him service, delivered him his sceptre, a polished black round stick, in a handsome manner---that they returned with great honesty the silver spoons, with which they had supped; (for he entertained them with Peruvian conserves and sweet-meats, abundance of which he had taken in a prize a little before)---that there was no quarrelling among their women, about the inequality of the distribution of what was set down in common to them all, though some that wanted spoons fared but poorly---that when he was going to set sail, a lively sorrow was painted in all their countenances, their women were in tears, and many of the men staid in the ship, and would not stir, till she was under sail; and then with dejected aspects, leaped over-board, and swam back. It is true he treated them kindly, as it was his interest. But had they been the savages described by other navigators, or such as we call civilized, that is, instructed after our manner, they might, and would have been their own carvers, considering that his men were not above twenty-seven in number, and those weak and sickly with the incredible hardships they had endured, whereas hundreds of their swarthy guests were constantly on board, of an appearance so terrible, that even his negroes born in Guinea were frightened to venture among them.---His words are “*The men are tall, straight, and well set, have very large limbs, with coarse black shaggy hair, which does not reach down to their thighs, as a late navigator reports, or hardly down to their shoulders. Their women are of a much smaller size, their hair much longer than the mens, some of their faces are almost covered with it. Some of both sexes have good countenances, but of a* much

things, which we account the pleasures of life. In these circumstances then, let us con-

much darker complexion than any Indians I saw in these seas, these being of a deep copper colour. Such is the original simplicity prevailing amongst them, that the men go quite naked, and wear nothing at all but a few trifles, which they look upon as ornaments, such as a band of red and white silk-grass, which some wear round their heads, adorned on each side with a tuft of hawk's feathers; others have pieces of mother of pearl, and small shells tied in their hair, and hanging about their necks; some have a large necklace of six or seven strings, composed of small red and black dried berries; some are scarified all over their bodies, others use a kind of paint, some besmearing only their faces and breasts with black, and others are regularly painted all over from the face to the naval with black, and from thence down to their feet with red. The women, on the contrary, wear a thick fringe of silk-grass reaching from their middle down to their knees, and have a deer's skin carelessly wrapped over their shoulders; some of the better sort had a skin of a large bird. From what I have been relating of their personal appearance, my reader may reasonably conclude, that nothing can be more savage. But there is a wide difference between what one would, upon the first sight, expect to find from them, and what they really are; for by all that I could discern in their behaviour towards one another, and their deportment towards us, they are endued with all the humanity imaginable, and may make some nations, who would give these poor people the epithets of savages and barbarians, blush to think that they deserve those appellations more than they; for all the time we were there, and constantly among so many hundreds of them, there was nothing to be perceived but the most agreeable harmony, and most affectionate esteem for one another, in so much, that when any one of us, gave any thing to any one of them in particular, he always divided it into as many shares as there were persons about him, and commonly reserved the least for himself. They seldom walk single, but go most by pairs, hand in hand. They appear to be perfectly meek, and there is no indication of cruelty in either their aspects or actions. They indeed seem to be pretty haughty towards their women, which perhaps may proceed from too great an opinion of the superiority

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consider in what proper employment they could spend their time, consistently with their

rity of their own sex. In the main, they lead a careless life, and have every thing in common amongst them; and search for nothing, except the necessary supports of life, viz. meat and drink, by which means they are free from the anxious troubles, to which those nations are subject, where luxury and pride have got any footing; a solid content seems to dwell in the midst of them, so that they do not covet, (and have no reason for it,) nothing belonging to one another; and never offered to pilfer or steal any of our tools, and other utensils, which might have been of great service to them: so strict was their honesty in this particular, that some of my men, who had been cutting wood all day, and were coming on board in the evening, heedlessly forgetting that they had left their axes in the wood, it was observed by one of the Indians standing by, that they had not taken their tools with them, who immediately spoke to the king, (who was also standing to see our boat go off,) who sent him directly into the woods to fetch the axes, which he accordingly did, and delivered them to my people, with a seeming satisfaction that they did not go away without them. In a word, they seem to pass their lives in the purest simplicity of the earliest ages of the world, before discord and contention were heard of amongst men. They as yet have never been tainted by the conversation or intercourse of other nations, which might have perverted the innocence of their morals, and have never had their spirits chased by the oppressions of a conqueror, who by exercising cruelties over them, might have taught them to delight in barbarity, as has happened to the Indians of Mexico, and Peru, who doubtless had their notions of inhumanity greatly augmented by the Spaniards, who shewed them a horrid example, by their continual butcheries of the Indians, not so much as sparing their kings, and also by their commotions amongst themselves. As yet, these Californians may be said to act according to the dictates of nature, whilst we act contrary to the remonstrances of our reason. One of our late navigators, has represented them as idle and lazy, and jealous of their women, alledging that he could never have a sight of any but such as were old. I cannot tell how that gentleman, and his people treated them, but we found that they are not slothful

their exclusion from all improvement of the rational nature, and the notion of being nothing

so much by inclination, as a disuse from anything laborious; and as to their women, we had the company of some hundreds of young and old every day, who never made any scruple of appearing amongst us; nor did the men shew the least discontent at it; and I may venture to say that we engaged them so far by trifling presents, and entertainments, that no body upon these terms, need want their assistance for the future; though perhaps none may have so much provisions to spare, as I had at that time to regale them with." He tells us in the sequel of his narrative, that they would never allow any of his ship's company to take snuff, probably because some of them might have suffered death or sickness, by taking something up the nose---that they would not allow him to look through his perspective at those, who were wooding and watering on the shore---Their language, he says, is guttural, and harsh to the ear; that they talked much amongst themselves, which though not at all understood, was accompanied with actions remarkably expressive.---He had once, he says, a design to bring off some of the youngest; but not being able to communicate his design to them in words, he would not endeavour to do it by unfair means. It had been pity, in truth, to have given this harmless people an example of any bad action, and Mr. Shelvocke seems to have been the least capable to have done it, of any sea-faring man. Their dwellings, he says, were mean, scarce affording them shelter.---That their diet is fish, which they sometimes eat raw, and bake sometimes in the sands---That the men are expert harpooners, and will strike and bring in the largest Albicores, which was more than several of his men joined together could do. From the circumstances he mentions of their killing a monstrous fish, they appear to have great strength, courage, and address. It was, it seems, their fishing season then; but they have also a hunting season; as appeared by the numerous deer-skins he saw among them---What they had for bread, was a small black seed of an oily substance, bruised and made up in rolls. Their manner of drinking is remarkably

thing after death. This notion indeed being admitted, all cultivation or enlargement of their intellectual powers, would confessedly be to no manner of purpose at all. For to pursue that improvement, as it might enable them to provide better for the body, would be superfluous; since by the supposition, without care, or industry in them, the earth offered them spontaneously all the necessaries and comforts, the body is capable of receiving. And to improve the mind, purposely to enlarge it's faculties, would be improper, as it would exalt their nature into a condition unsuitable to their destiny, annihilation at death. Thus exempt from

simple: whenever they want to drink, they go up to their middle in the river, and there take up the water in their hands, or stoop down and suck it up.---Thus, between hunting, fishing, eating, and sleeping, their whole time is divided, which by these exercises and a spare diet, is prolonged to a great duration; many of both sexes living to a very old age, as their grey hairs and extraordinary wrinkles testified.---Their arms, he says, are bows and arrows. Their very women commonly go out to the woods, thus armed, in search of game. He speaks of an old man, with terrible gashes in his thigh, the marks of an engagement with some wild beast, whose skin covered him.---Their government he guesses must be pacific and full of lenity. Among other instances of their kindness, and civility, he says, their prince observing one of his officers employed in cutting a tree, ordered one of his attendants to take the axe, and work in his stead.---He ends thus.---“*In short, they enjoy in every respect a perfect tranquillity, to the happiness of which nothing could be added, but the knowledge of the true God, and the right way of worshipping him.*”

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trouble of every sort about the body, the whole species having all their time entirely at command, should we suppose them bent earnestly upon the acquisition of knowledge, they would soon carry their discoveries too far, especially if we imagine they had the present stock as a foundation to build upon. They would quickly launch forth into all sublime researches, and matters quite foreign to the end of their being, and presently meet the shock, from which nature recoils, with abhorrence and dread,—an universal blank, an utter, speedy, and sudden period of existence! How would this agree with a mind thus thinking, thus knowing and curious. Driven, as a refuge from the apprehension of this dreadful shock, to trifling pastimes, could they bring in the improvement of the rational nature for a share in their diversion? No surely. What is too serious to be a man's business, must upon that account, be the more unsuitable to become his diversion. These mental occupations being laid aside, as improper, let us now inquire, in what way they could dispose of their time.

3. It is plain that, in these circumstances, they could have no other business, but to get the whole burthen of time off their hands. It will, upon reflection, be found a difficult matter to make a consistent supposition, or contrive a possible method, how they could pass, or dispose of it. Nature prevents

prevents their wishes in every thing besides, offers them all things ready for their acceptance. The more we suppose the task of providing for themselves is lessened, the more we increase the difficulty. And by supposing that task lessened to nothing, the redundant time will be found to grow insupportably troublesome. Having no necessity to excite, no exercise to employ them, nothing profitable to prosecute, what could they pursue? Whatever they did, must be utterly unavailing to their nature; as well undone as done. Being thus utterly unprofitable, try to conceive it pleasant if you can. Activity, we know, to a certain degree, is congenial to the natural constitution of man, and requisite to it's well being. They must therefore languish and pine, for want of something to exert their activity about, something that might be pleasant in itself, or profitable, from some necessity of theirs, both which the supposition denies them. But imagine them, if you please, lazy and sluggish, by inclination, and habit, ever disposed to rest and loll, till indisposition, contracted by inactivity, compelled them to motion; and then moving only till rest again became less unpleasant; and in either case waiting, with impatience, the returns of sleep, hunger, thirst, weariness, with no superior aim, to diversify their existence, or enliven the dulness of this torpid state. In this most irksome condition of having nothing to do, would it not have been better to divest them at once of that
that

that active power of the soul, reflection, which aggravates the misery of it, by making them visibly, as it were, perceptive of the length of passing time, all spent in a tedious despicable circle of listless idleness. A still increasing satiety of time, from which no relief is expected, must appear a truly pitiable, and painful circumstance. If ever necessity set invention at work, it would be in this case; to find out something to ease this constant burthen, to beguile or remove this universal complaint; and the supposition leaving them no other expedient, we are, of course, driven, if there be no hereafter, to the same lamentable conclusion, as before in Section II; even with respect to this most favoured race of men. ---That the only proper happiness we are capable of, on the supposition of annihilation at death, is to feel our misery as little as may be, to be constantly deceived, by thoughtless amusements, or insignificant, and at best unpainful pursuits, any thing, that may take time off our hands, and help us to get easily rid of our existence again.

4. In our first conceptions of the state of men, under this supposition, and from the accounts we find of it in poetry, we are apt to conclude it would be the greatest happiness to these men, to range the sylvan scene, rest on the mossy bed, and sing their happy loves. This may do mighty well in description; but taken out of it's poetical dress, and realized, will it indeed be found so

so pleasant ? It is a question, whether men would have ever pursued the rural sports of fishing, fowling, hunting, and destroying the animal race, if they had not had necessities to provide, or their safety to secure. In either case, we are deceived by much false colouring in the description. The secure, and harmless men, in the supposition before us, could have neither of these ends in view, having nothing to fear, and no other necessity, but what would arise from the want of something to do. From the account given by captain Shelvocke, of the Californians, about Puerto Seguro, we cannot reasonably conclude that such innocent, pacific men, would ever have found a diversion in destroying the inferior creatures, if their wants had not made it necessary. They divided their time between hunting, fishing, eating, and sleeping. But if they had been freed from the trouble of providing for themselves, they would have had nothing to do, but to satisfy their merely animal appetites. To an unreflecting mind, an artful pen might represent this, in such a manner as to make it appear a very pleasant existence, but to speak things as they are, it draws very near the life of brutes. As to love, the constant theme of descriptive writers, in romance, or poetry, even as it is there set forth in all it's glowing, but delicate colours ; love, itself, appears to derive it's rapturous delights, from difficulties surmounted, and the storms of distress, and danger

danger being successfully weathered out. We should esteem him a wretchedly bungling scribbler of a novel, who could think to entertain us, by bringing his plain and artless lovers together, according to their inclination, without interest, intrigue, difficulty, or rivalry, or any untoward accident to cross their designs. Could we behold them with satisfaction, or without disgust, thus represented as coming together, merely to gratify a natural appetite? Besides the art of fine writing, in a work of genius, and the similitude of nature, in its drawings, we are pleased to be deluded into an idea of a vast inequality of pleasure, in the imaginary state, we see thus happily delineated, above our real one. Though not absolutely free from pain, yet compared with the scenes of life before us, we think it an elysium. It is such a state as that of our first childhood, where our greatest happiness is an exemption from all acquaintance with the cares and concerns of life; where we have all the conveniences that can be applied to our nature, provided to our hands, and our only trouble is to find something to amuse, and keep us busy. From the station wherein we are placed, we are tempted to turn, and look back on both these states of life, with foolish envy. In real life it is in vain that we look round for that undisturbed tranquillity, which poets give to the first race of men, and advanced life expects not
to

to find that ease and want of care which we enjoyed when children; before we were compelled to launch forth on the tempestuous sea of business: Yet we must observe, that both these states have their own little disquietudes, and vexations; their trifling designs, warmly pursued, and disappointed with mortification, which should teach us to make more considerable abatements in our estimate of their happiness, than we are aware, and make us conclude it is not sufficient to constitute them happy. It would not, did not make us happy in their place. Both have seemed impatient to quit a condition, which fancy paints as very desirable. Children, out of ignorance of what is before them, hasten to get out of that state, covet to be men; and men, from a life at first innocent, and simple, (†) somewhat like that in this supposition, thinking to multiply it's conveniencies, and lessen it's wants, have advanced it through the several degrees of ingenious pain, and degeneracy, till they have, by successive improvements, from age to age, brought it at length to that high pitch of perfection in misery, in which we find it at this day.

(†) *Quippe aliter tunc orbe novo, cæloque recenti,
Vivebant homines. Juv. Sat. VI.*

The general prepossession here expressed, might, in Juvenal's time, have been confirmed by observations on the people of Britain, (or Scythia,) as it is to us, by the discoveries of late navigators.

5. Let

5. Let us now look back upon the wide blank, which a consideration of the state of men, upon this supposition, throws upon all the flattering prospects of earthly pleasure, attendant upon the wishes, and gay pursuits of men. It is impossible to place mankind in more favourable circumstances with respect to sensual pleasure, though each man by himself should have as much at command, as is now possessed by all men taken together, than to have thus at hand, without painful toil, a continual supply of all the necessaries, all the comforts the body can require. Yet strictly, and truly speaking, we find this happy race of mortals, if excluded from a better life hereafter, in a state somewhat less eligible, in their bodies, than that of vegetables, and in their minds, than that of brutes. The conditions of this supposition were surely made sufficiently large and extensive. All other pleasures, and advantages possible, were allowed to take place, with the exclusion only of rational pleasure to try the efficacy of their nature to make us happy: And the more all other gratifications, helps, and conveniences are crowded together, the more it shews how unavailing they all are to satisfy a rational nature. Our wishes, our very imagination is impotent. (u) We cannot form, in short,

(u) Lucian has finely shewn, in the dialogue entitled "The Ship, or the Wishes," an insufficiency in the nature of things, of all earthly pleasures possible to be imagined,

short, the consistent idea of any enjoyment, that would not leave us miserable, if rational pleasure were denied us. The solid conclusion, so often repeated, will here inevitably recur to the mind of the reflecting reader. The eternal congruities between faculties, and their objects, are unalterable. They proceed from a necessary agreement between their ideas in the divine intellect: And therefore they admit of no succedaneum, of our contrivance.

6. Having thus applied to the use intended, this supposition of a sort of earthly paradise restored, or of the primitive state of plenty, and simplicity: let us proceed to notice, in what different shapes, pain and misery must gradually succeed, as the conditions of human life are supposed to be changed, and that it is impossible to take one step out of the circumstances of that primitive state, in order to better our condition, without changing for the worse, and becoming more

imagined, to make us happy. One wishes for a ship full of coined gold, another for stately palaces, ample tracts of fertile ground, and numerous attendants, another to swim in voluptuousness, and all the height of luxury, another to be an universal conqueror and monarch. Other wishes succeed, for the power of becoming invisible at pleasure, and of being constantly young, and healthy, stronger than ten thousand men, the power of flying, &c. But Lycinus shews them all successively the folly and deceit of their wishes, and concludes:

—Εμοὶ δὲ καὶ τὸτο ἱκανὸν ἀντὶ πάντων θησαυρῶν, ἢ Βαβυλῶνος αὐτῆς, τὸ γελάσαι μάλα ἡδίστως, ἐφ' οἷς ὑμεῖς ἠτήσατε, τοῖς τοις ἔσι, καὶ ταῦτα φιλοσοφίαν ἐπαίνοντες.

miserable

miserable, unless the immortality of the soul, and the improvement of the rational nature are allowed to take place. The poets, significantly enough, placing the golden age first, express the successive degrees of degeneracy, and proportional increase of wretchedness, by a metal still less precious than the former, only we have not metals enough to stand for the several declensions, into which we are fallen, of vice and misery. Let us then suppose, that the earth is not any longer that *alma tellus* of the golden age, that kind yielding parent, the spontaneous emanations of whose breast were ever ready to supply the wants of all it's inhabitants, without any farther pains than the taking at pleasure what they stood in need of: But is become, by some convulsive stroke of nature, a niggardly, unyielding glebe, that will give nothing, without being forcibly turned, wrought, and compelled to it: that the *ver æternum* of the former supposition is now diversified with nipping cold, and scorching heat, immoderate rains, and violent storms. This begets a melancholy change in the face of the earth, and the condition of it's inhabitants. We may now conceive them roused from their former security and ease, with a sense of the change, and a fear of want; all in hurry and motion, enforcing the soil to yield them food; and defending themselves from the violent extremes of the distempered air. They can-

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not now languish for want of something to amuse, or employ their time. A greater care, of a contrary kind, succeeds. Their life is now, confessedly a life of pain and trouble. Although they teach brutes, (who also resent this disastrous change,) to undergo some part of their labour, yet a great burthen of bodily toil, still remains to themselves; and much anxiety, and disquiet of mind besides, of which they can make their yoke-fellow bear no share. No provision seems now enough for their wants, no security enough for their fears. Thus they support an anxious, trembling, precarious existence; and from the strength of some magical illusion, still embrace, and continue in love with their misery. (x) Food, and raiment, now become articles of capital importance, our care of which, increases with the difficulty of caring for them. All hands are in some way or other employed, to supply the pressing wants of the body. All heads are busy in contriving for it's ease, and providing for it's necessities and conveniencies. And yet the joint efforts of all the hands and heads of the whole species, cannot bring back things to the happy state of the former supposition: that is, cannot secure to them-

(x) This strange love, (*φιλαρτία*, as some ancient significantly calls it,) of life and existence, is an inexplicable appearance, if at death we cease to be. Is it not rather then the effect of exquisite malice, to make us hug a painful thing? It is easily explicable, on the other supposition, where, as rational, we desire the endless existence, for which we are designed.

selves

selves a quantity of pleasure equal to that, which, in a fair balance, has been found to be none at all; not so much as but a moderate degree of clear unbalanced pain. That life, which lately seemed so unworthy of our choice, or acceptance, so much below the dignity of the rational nature, endears itself now surprizingly to our dazzled fancy, by it's comparative brightness, and the greater pains it costs us to defend ourselves from extreme wretchedness. Our designs appear changed, but are not heightened; and are only esteemed more worthy, from the difficulty, the impossibility of bringing them to pass.

7. From this first stage of advancement, or degradation from the primitive state of uncultivated nature, let us extend our views progressively, through all the several stages of civilization, or what we call improvement. We may now suppose that they have contrived and invented a great variety of tools, to facilitate, and bring their works to greater perfection: that sharpening their invention by necessity, they render wood, stone, iron, the softer and harder metals, all the inanimate, and animate creation round them, subservient to their conveniencies in some shape or other. They spin, they weave themselves a more agreeable covering than the skins of beasts; they press the winds, the waters, to grind their corn; they compel these to bear and those to drive their

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burthens.

burthens. They save themselves much bodily fatigue, by many compendious methods, and mechanical contrivances; raising stupendous weights with ease, which would greatly exceed all animal force; and applying these artificial helps to the performance of a thousand wonders, that seemed before impossible to human power. Yet once more, all this is not sufficient to bring them back to the easy circumstances of the former supposition; wherein such happy inventions, surprizing compends, and applauded arts were useless. In that comparative estimate they all appear, in truth, but the pitiful shifts of misery and want, the ingenuity of wretchedness; and the standing in no need of them to be far better than the infinite variety, most desired success, and greatest possible perfection of these fine discoveries.

8. When men have carried their inventions to such a pitch of perfection in all the arts, and the mitigations of bodily fatigue, as to supply with tolerable ease, the absolute necessities, and reasonable conveniencies of life; it would be well, if they should stop there. For at, or about this point consists the greatest degree of pleasure, of which this present state is capable. Due consideration at least ought here to be taken, lest in multiplying their inventions, and carrying them beyond the point of conveniency, they do but wander the farther from the mark they aim

aim at. But here they fall into a double mistake: For not adverting, that it is impossible to raise bodily affection to the side of pure unbalanced pleasure, and finding their inventive powers as strong, and fertile as before; from the experience of success, in a due and useful provision for the real conveniencies of life, they propose to carry it still farther, to serve the luxuries of it; never questioning but that pleasure may rise in proportion with their improvement in art and invention. This has been shewn to be a plain impossibility, from the nature, and constitution of the body. It is just as unskilful an attempt, as any one might fall into, by a work that was planned upon a principle, that water, of itself, may naturally rise above the level of it's fountain. From this mistake we gradually slide into another. Fondly congratulating ourselves upon this false shew of success, we forget the true end of rational existence, and tacitly allow it to consist in thus administering to false pleasure. We imagine we have existed to great purposes, answering the dignity of our nature, by displaying much ingenuity in thus delicately soothing the sickly cravings of a feverish fancy. Let a degree of merit be attributed to every invention of a partial remedy to our earthly misery; yet the highest refinement of art, is not enough to make a thinking being compleatly happy; nor is it true, that our rational faculties

have been given us to no higher purposes, than to serve the sensitive. Could we perform all those precious works by a nod, or command them by a wish, would this alter the nature of our bodies; or raise us above the conditions, from which we are fallen; wherein, according to the supposition, all the necessities, and comforts of life were liberally bestowed by the immediate hand of nature? This is no derogation from the praise due to useful inventions. Next to wise Law-givers, the sagacious improvers of profitable arts have been the greatest benefactors of the species, and the most honourable members of society; and are deservedly placed by Virgil, in the blissful abodes, where a distinguished station is assigned to

—“*Inventas qui vitam excoluere per artes.*”—

Some arts there are, which though not necessary to life, yet embellish it greatly; and serve to give our misery a fairer outside; as ornamental architecture, navigation, statuary, painting, music; and which require a great cultivation of the rational powers, and a vast reach of thought; insomuch that scarce any thing requires more. Yet so far as they tend only to the amusements of life, which are mitigations of pain alone, they can procure us no clear balance of pleasure. And in so far as they serve to improve, and exercise the intellectual faculties of the soul, they must be considered as referable to an
higher

higher end. (y) Though it be true, that by the mere necessities of the body, we are forced on the first improvements of reason : Yet having answered this purpose, it is manifestly the intent of our Creator, that this excellent faculty should be applied to some nobler end. Many confessed pastimes and diversions demand great sagacity and forecast. Some of them are erected into a kind of demonstrable science, by the help of calculation ; yet does not this make them any thing better than pastimes ; or things capable of affording clear satisfaction to the reflecting mind. No man, I believe, ever had his rational faculties improved to such a pitch, as to play the game of chess in the greatest possible perfection. But allowing that some egregious adept could do it ; would it not be a strange assertion to say, that this was the true end, for which the Deity made him rational ?

9. How is it, after all, that men pass the critical point before-mentioned, and imagine that the pleasures of the body may be carried to any height they please ? If they list

(y) Τὰ πλεῖστα τῶν ἐπὶ τὴν βίον ἢ δι' αὐτὰ τὰ πρῶτα ποιῶμεν, ἀλλὰ τῶν ἀποβαινόντων ἕνεκα διαποιῶμεν. This is an excellent observation of Isocrates, and precisely applicable to our investigation of the true end of existing. We should consider what it is, we do for itself alone, and would wish to be always doing. This would lead us to the thing, we want to know. What we do for the sake of some farther view, can never be the true end of our being.

tened to the rule of right reason ; it would shew them how far the body, and how far the mind is capable of being gratified. This rule being disregarded, the inordinate lust of pleasure drives them into various extremes of madness. They think no provision for the body, how ample soever, is superfluous. Hence avarice takes possession of the soul, at the same time that they must be well aware, how small a quantity of this exorbitantly increasing mass can be applied to their nature. Excessive wealth enabling them to reap the fruit of the labours of other men, and to get free of the drudgery themselves ; another unruly passion succeeds, ambition, or the lust of power. They seek to secure their property in their craftily accumulated acquisitions. They strive with borrowed splendor, assumed importance, and all the execrable arts of intrigue, faction, bribery and corruption, to rise above the heads, and trample upon the rights of men born their equals ; till uncontrolled command becomes the great object of their desire, and their sole imagined felicity. These frantic passions, with others constantly found in their train, proceed originally from the mistake above-mentioned, and spread misery and pain, far and wide, throughout the species. Thus our wretchedness is arrived to it's greatest pitch. And this is the present state of mankind in the world.

10. Having seen the prevalence of bodily pain, above pleasure, in all the real, or imaginable conditions and circumstances of human life, an objection meets us still; and attempts to bar the conclusion we are led to draw from it. We have ourselves alone to thank, it may be said, for all this overbalance of misery.---It is the just reward of our own folly, and vice.---The exactest justice may obtain here, even upon the supposition of no after-state.—Not to repeat what has been said of the innumerable instances, to which this objection can, with no propriety, be applied: Let us suppose the wise regulations of some law-giver, with the salutary maxims of some moralist, to produce universally such good effects, that all men were now not only restored to the primitive simplicity, and innocence of the former supposition; but were influenced, in their mutual dealings with each other, by an uniform virtue, and constant benevolence; that they kindly relieved one another in distress; supporting each, as far as might be, his neighbour's pain, and living in a course of unremitted good offices, and a commerce of the most consummate friendship. This, no doubt, would, amazingly brighten and meliorate the circumstances of human life. But would even this bring them back to the happy condition of the primitive race? The greater the dividend of pain is, the greater each man's particular share would be;

be; if it were all divided equally. Now the equal division of the common mass of pain, and misery is all that virtue, when most perfect, and exercised most universally, could effect, in a world like this. Much evil, admitting no compleat equivalent of good, appeared inevitable in the state, where the bounty of nature was more abundant, and preventive of want, and pain. Will natural evil be more easily remedied now, when so vastly greater a proportion of it prevails? In this view certainly virtue will not appear to be it's own complete reward. If we consider what each kind of virtue in particular is conversant about; we shall see its tendency is only to lessen the quantity of pain, in some individual sufferer, or a certain number of sufferers; which is generally to be endured, in some degree, by all. Justice inspects that every man bears his own pains, and that none bear more than is necessary, or reasonable. Temperance teaches us to suffer as little pain as possible, by refusing false pleasure, and voluntarily undergoing the pain, consequent upon the due restraint of appetite. Prudence is the knowledge and observance of the proper methods of warding off the dangers, and difficulties of life. Fortitude is the facing danger with intrepidity, or the bearing affliction with constancy. Patience is the tolerance, without complaint, of pain and uneasiness; and Contentment is satisfaction under a state,
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not considered as eligible, but necessary. Thus virtue, in this life, may be only so far said to be it's own reward, as it prevents our being more miserable. Yet, in any supposition that can be made, the nature of virtue is salutary; and tends to the peace, and happiness of mankind. But that, on the most advantageous supposition, that can be made, and notwithstanding the most perfect virtue, a considerable overbalance of pain will still prevail in human life, is manifest: And it strongly evinces that, if there be an infinitely just and benevolent Creator, and Ruler of the universe, our virtuous endeavours to make each other less wretched here, is not all the reward we are to expect, after having been inevitably miserable ourselves. When we are told that virtue, without a dowry, is rich, in extreme want; can keep us warm in the thinnest tatters; can enjoy perfect ease in agonizing torture; such studied rants, and flights above the reach of nature, and common sense, but move our laughter and pity. Conscious integrity, may mitigate the pangs of wretchedness; but can we say it is well rewarded, without a balance of happiness in it's favour?

11. Let us now suppose that some acute philosopher, and orator, possessed of irresistible powers of arguing, and the art of persuading this reformed and virtuous race of men, should raise his front, like Epicurus, against the providence of God, and succeed

ceed in convincing them, beyond all question, that after death, they should become nothing : And let us rationally deduce how creatures under this conviction would act, and how they would be likely to pass their time. For all the pain and toil they had before voluntarily undergone, under the hopes, or prepossession of existing in a future period, they must undergo a new, and bitter portion of reflection upon their past delusion, deprived of their wonted support under present pain, and dispirited by the dark prospect, closing their brief term of misery. Can we imagine that being certain, that nothing will succeed this short span, they would enter into any considerable improvement of the rational nature ? This, we have already proved to be referable merely to a second period. Would they give themselves the needless trouble of preparing for a state, into which they believed they were never to enter ? Would they engage themselves in the contemplation of truth, which might furnish a pleasant, and glorious employment to their minds, through an endless lapse of duration, to which they once had flattered themselves, the present period was but a preparatory state ? They are now, alas ! cut off from the consideration, that the rational nature is capable of endless improvement, and endless pleasure, as they prepare themselves for it, here ; where all their views are now confined to

to a hand-breadth of existence. Will they let slip the pleasures relative only to the present period, few and trifling as they appear to be, for a pursuit, which must render the prospect of losing their existence so soon, more painful than if they had never dreamt of any thing pleasant beyond it? This would be to suppose them rational and irrational at the same time. Reason being thus considered as the substitute merely of instinct in brutes, to provide for the necessities of the body, would be thought unnecessary, nay hurtful to them, if applied to any higher purpose, to the contemplation of the wonders of nature, or the wisdom, and goodness of it's almighty Author, which is the chief bent of reason, when most improved and perfect. Acting now consistently with their new persuasion, they would center all their endeavours solely in driving away pain from the body; seeking to plunge themselves into utter thoughtlessness, and negligence of all things else; happy, if they can bring themselves down to the level of the brutes, whose uniform nature of existence they begin to envy, as better proportioned to their short period. They would deplore this greatest aggravation of human misery, that it solicits, and turns our thoughts always upon itself: Yet a vacancy of reflection, that great relief to the wretched, would be denied them still. How wishfully would they cast an eye upon the sprightliness of some little insect,

insect, fluttering in the sun-beams, from flower to flower, not musing dolefully, like themselves, under the shadow of a leaf, upon it's precarious and transitory state, calculating the short remainder of it's duration, trembling at imaginary perils impending, and haunted with melancholy forebodings of the dire effects of the first nipping frost, in blasting the beauty of it's wings, and putting an end at once to all it's sporting, all it's gaiety. It knows nothing of their harder lot, who pursuing the relations of things to each other, busy in the pursuit of abstracted truth, and eager to increase their stock of knowledge have discovered the endless improveableness of their nature--to how little purpose?—only to lose the pleasures proper to their present existence. Is not this absurdity as ridiculous in them, as the profound philosophy, and gloomy contemplation, in a butterfly? And does not one diurnal revolution of the sun, and seventy annual ones, bear just the same proportion to eternity, that is none at all? Seriously they must confess the condition of the brutes that perish is more eligible than that of man, if he is to perish with them. (z)

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(z) Lucian's ἀλεξίφρων is thus questioned by Micyllus. --When you animated a horse, a hound, a fish, a frog; how did you bear that kind of life? --ἵππος δὲ, ἢ κύων, ἢ ἰχθύς, ἢ βατεράχος ὅποτε γένοιτο, πῶς ἰστέρις ἐκείνῃ τὴν διατέβην; ---He answers thus---Not a life among them all, but being circumscribed within the bounds of natural wants and

Their life exempt from care and the pain of reflection, and but lightly afflicted with the pains of sense, is commonly dissolved by a momentary pang—while man, furnished with the glorious apparatus of endless existence, with faculties impelling him to enter into the nature, and relations of it, to hope, and desire it; after being miserably tortured by the constant civil war within him, maintained by the contrary principles, of reason, and sense, is like the brutes extinguished all at once, and for ever. It is impossible for them not to add — ἢ ὁ Θεός, ἢ ὁ Χρῆστος.

12. What now becomes of the virtue of this reformed race of men? The idea of virtue implies our duty to some superior. But their newly adopted notion has led them to a disbelief of the Supreme Being. The strength, the health, the plenteous provision they enjoyed before, they had readily ascribed to God. They had owned their dependance upon him for every blessing, which they were very sensible they had not from themselves. But this supposition of being nothing after death, renders virtue, in this sense, inconsistent, or founds the practice of it in our misery. For why be grateful to this Being, for raising us up to

and desires, is freer from vexation than that of man.
 'Ουδὲς ὅστις ἐν ἀπαιμονίστοις τῶν βίων ἰδοὺ μοι τῷ
 ἀνθρωπείῳ, μόναις ταῖς φυσικαῖς ἐπιθυμίαις καὶ χρεῖαις
 ἐμμεμετρήμενος.

inevitable wretchedness? It would have been kinder never to have given us an existence, than to have given us a nature percipient only of pain. If it should be said, that we ought to be resigned to his decree, and thankful still, for his not suffering our misery to grow extreme; since the exercise of virtue, in dependent creatures, and as it respects the Author of their nature, may require this; yet certainly such virtue could never make us happy. It could at most be only a qualification of misery. Every act of worship then, which they could pay to such a Being, would only keep them still adverting to the cause of misery. Would not this be a worshipping the devil as their deity for fear of his malice? All pretence of moral obligation, must cease at once among them. They might make laws among themselves, to preserve an equality of pleasure and pain, as much as might be, or as the nature of things would admit. But if any man could secure to himself more pleasure in the breach of these laws, than in the observance, they must reckon him a fool, who upon any occasion, should prefer the good of others to his own private advantage. And they would be under no restraint from injuring others, for their own convenience; except by these laws of human invention. For let the defenders of annihilation say whose law does the injurious man violate? Not the law of an infinitely just Being, upon
their

their hypothesis. For if the violation of the laws of such a Being were not punished, he could not be infinitely just; his laws could be of no force. The offender not seeing his wrong dealings punished here, and dreading no resentment of the Deity hereafter, when he should become nothing; he would act precisely, as if he were convinced there was no God, who governed the world. Thus the opinion of the mortality of the soul will settle of course into downright Atheism.

13. By instituting the argument thus, upon the most pleasing prospect of external circumstances in the natural world, and the strictest regularity, and order imaginable in the moral, we are necessarily led to conclude that the denial of a future state after death, implies a denial of the moral attributes of the Deity, a denial of the being of a God, infinitely just and good. Some well-meaning men have thought much caution should be used, in pushing the argument for the immortality of the soul, from the justice of God. They see, and own it solid; but despair of obviating this evasion, which infidelity will be apt to start against it; that it engages the infinite medley and confusion of human affairs in the conclusion, upon which we are too weak-sighted to pronounce with certainty; and which only an all-knowing God can disentangle. But since misery is shewn to be the inevitable portion

of man in this life, upon a view of the fairest conditions, external and internal, we can imagine possible; this shifting is prevented, and the difficulty vanishes. It is confessed that vice and folly multiply our misery immensely, and that so far they are their own punishment. But since it is now apparent that we should still be miserable, though there were no vice nor folly among men, the proof is established, without perplexity.

14. Hence also we may draw the only satisfactory solution, we can obtain in this life, of this grand question.—Why, if the world be indeed the work of an infinitely good Being, is it not constituted so, that there should be neither physical, nor moral evil in it?—Though the constitution of the material world, of our bodies in particular, is such, that physical evil is necessarily felt, yet since this constitution has a plain connexion with an endless after-period, the goodness and justice of this Being, firmly supported by other topics, are not to be arraigned by this. Here is no pain proposed to be endured without a compensation; but a short inconsiderable pain, to be succeeded by a great, and lasting pleasure. It is thus, the vindication must be made for both these attributes. And to say, the providence of God should have so ordered the world, that moral evil should have been impossible, is to say, infinite wisdom should not have made free,

free, that is, moral agents,--a palpably frantic absurdity! all the moral and physical perfections of the Supreme Being will shine out more conspicuously in that second period, when all the perplexities of the moral world shall be unravelled, and order, and beauty be displayed with the greater glory, and magnificence, from the present apparent confusion. It will then, without question, transport us with inexpressible pleasure, to see, what we esteemed the random strokes of erring chance, all visibly conducing to serve some wise, and excellent purpose. Being then experimentally convinced that (a)--"*aptissima quæque dabunt Dii*," we may add, with sure and grateful confidence,---"*charior est illis homo, quam sibi*." But to infer that because of the present disorders, there is no God, and therefore no hereafter, is just as wise an argument as that of Damis, in Lucian,--That he had been blaspheming their godheads for many a long year; and they had taken no notice of it yet: no notice could they take: and consequently they were not.--His temerity he maintains by this weak presumption, that what has not been yet, can never be.

15. When improved reason, sound philosophy, and true religion have cleared this most perplexing difficulty in the mind of man; when he has learnt to pay a due at-

(a) Juvenal, Sat. 10. ———— 'Οἱ γὰρ (Θεοὶ) ἰδὲν δαδὲν διατιθεῖσσι μὲ, πάλαι ἀκρόντες, ἔγχε δακρύσει.

Jupiter Tragedus;

tention to the necessary consequences, which follow from the impossibility of the non-existence of a Being infinitely perfect, and powerful; the present period of existence will become as pleasant to him, as the nature of things will allow. His conduct, if conformable to this persuasion, will be regular, just and upright; as becomes a dependent creature, subject, and responsible to a Being supremely, and impartially good. In the consciousness of his maintaining this innocence, and integrity of conduct, he will place his greatest happiness, his most rational security. This consideration alone delivers man from his fears, from his folly and weakness, from himself. It takes the government of the world out of the hands of chance; and places it where the interests of all intelligent beings require it to be: And, let me add, it renders his hopes equal, in certainty, to present possession. Does this last assertion appear a too rash presumption? It is founded in eternal reason. Certainty itself loses it's nature; truth and demonstration go out in endless darkness, if it be not so. The nature of an infinitely perfect Being is the foundation of his confidence, that he can never cast him without the bounds of his knowledge, and power; and that he can never have the will to do this; that greater goodness than is in this Being is impossible, or implies a contradiction. All things therefore, which are best for his nature, will be granted him; if his mis-
conduct

conduct does not raise a bar to impartial justice, from treating him so kindly. Not only he, but all things else that exist, are equally, constantly under the inspection of this Being. The government of the world, in all the variety, multiplicity, vastness and minuteness of things, to be regulated, and set in order, is inseparable from the nature of this Being. For unbounded goodness joined to almighty power, and infinite wisdom to these, necessarily infer such a government. It is therefore impossible to such a Being, not to bring back to the rule of rectitude, the actions of all intelligent, and free Beings, which are out of it; or not to redress the wrong, and compensate the pain, which any of them have undeservedly suffered here.

16. Thus there is no abstract truth, no demonstration, more firm and sure than the hopes of this man. They cheer his heart perpetually with a comfortable prospect, and make him acquiesce, with full security, in all the dispensations of providence. Is he beset with perils, and difficulties of the dreadfullest aspect? He presently reflects, that no less a power than that, which made the worlds, and made the very things, which thus threaten him, is immediately concerned about him. If he is involved in some public calamity with other men; he instantly considers that infinite wisdom, cannot be mistaken in the infliction they are doomed to bear in common. His religious philo-

sophy will not allow him to vent a foolish invective against chance, or fortune, those names for nothing, always improperly applied to a real effect produced. Let him be overtaken by a storm at sea, he does not eliminate the presence and power of the Supreme Being from that time, from that place, from every threatening billow, and every furious gust of wind, any more than from the time, the place, the circumstances, which wore the smoothest, most smiling aspect towards him. There is the same reason for concluding his providence universal and unbounded then, as at other times: For reason, and demonstration do not hold by starts, or lose their conclusive force in the gloom of distress, which they had in the sunshine of prosperity. If things go well with him, he does not say my reason, or my power, or my wisdom hath effected this. Not vainly presuming that he is self-wise, or self-powerful, he betakes himself, in all things, for success, to a supreme First-Cause, of whom all nature is the creature. All the motions, all the operations in it, he considers as the effects of his power, or the permission of his will, and this infallibly, and always for the best, and wisest purposes. The denial of this were an express denial of his existence. And when he perceives his material part, which is always tending to a dissolution, even at it's early spring of youth, and vigour, is beginning to give plain signs that

that it can hold out but little longer; he beholds undisturbed his approaching change, and welcomes every new summons, as a timely invitation to appear shortly in the more immediate presence of a compassionate and tender Father. Though *in himself* he should discern nothing, that could insure him a perpetuity of conscious existence, yet from the consideration alone, that it is impossible the Author of his being should ever cease to be, or to be good, and true, he derives unfailing hope, and trust. He has the clearest evidence that the divine goodness and truth are engaged to preserve him in a future scene of existence. He knows it is God, who planted in his nature an endless desire of existence, a never-ceasing love of rational pleasure, a continual delight in considering himself as the creature, and dependant of the divine will; that he has wrongs to be redressed, accounts to be made up, appetites to be satisfied, and relations in his nature to be completed. In this persuasion, he rests satisfied that he is going to enter upon a new scene of life, more free and unconfined by the shackles of senseless matter, and better disposed to enjoy the new, and more excellent objects of rational pleasure.

17. It is not so with the man, the object of whose thought and belief, is the final cessation of his being all at once. He cannot qualify the pains and displeasures necessary

to be supported here, with such a comfortable prospect, and such a certain hope. It is true the future period itself is as certain to him, as to the other. But from all present satisfaction to be derived from thence, he wilfully debars his mind; and respect being had to divine justice and rectitude, he takes the ready way to forfeit the pleasures of it. He depends upon himself alone, and his own endeavours, for all that he expects. How he got his reason, or his knowledge, or his power, he disdains to enquire; and presumptuously considers himself as utterly unconcerned about their original, or the respect, and attention due to any being of a nature superior to his own, or any assistance and support from him, the notion of whose existence he has made it his sport, and business to deride. Nature, chance, fate, (vague, unmeaning sounds, in his mouth,) are his deities, his grand efficient causes of all things. These he knows not, dreams not of any method of soliciting in his behalf. Supposing them sacred, or necessary, he never applies to them; since good or bad actions, intreaties or no intreaties, a defiance of, or dependance upon them, are all equal, both to them, and him: As whatever they do, they do it necessarily, and so immutably; or at random, and so without a rule, or attention to any thing. In distressed, and calamitous

tious circumstances, he is driven to despair; and has no refuge but annihilation. In this state of utter despondency, the atheist, either betakes himself to his natural remedy in such a case, and violently rushes out of life; or the kind hand of adversity opens his eyes, displays the absurdity of his impious notions in full light, and strikes a feeling conviction into his heart of the inestimable value of that religion, and sound reason, which he has hitherto affected to slight.

*"Nam veræ voces tum demum pectore ab imo
"Eliciuntur, & eripitur persona, manet res." (b)*

It is for the same reason that we see him always insolent, and haughty, when fortune smiles upon him: And he acts precisely in character still, when he indecently flies from one extreme to the other. Reason is a mighty thing in his mouth, and his own reason a high perfection, though, in his judgment, the very Cause who effected him, and reason, is not rational. It cannot stand by him now in extremity. The caprice of chance, is a poor ground of trust. Precarious, dependent, yet he knows not upon what, not upon himself, (he feels that now;)

(b) Lucret. lib. iii. 655.

Quo magis in dubiis hominem spectare periculis
Convenit, adversisque in rebus noscere quid sit:

Nam veræ, &c. — Is not this a curious confession from a professed atheist? No man is an atheist in distress. It is Lucretius owns and complains of this.

beset

beset with dangers, terrors, ruin, whither shall he turn, where address his importunities for relief or succour? How abandoned is the state of a wretch so circumstanced, yet not acknowledging any Being greater, or more powerful than himself, to direct his prayers or wishes to, for safety! The religion of the most ignorant heathen is more according to the nature, and conditions of humanity, than this no-religion.

18. Thus dispiriting, and comfortless is this man's philosophy, with respect to all the powers above him. Is it not equally dark, equally absurd, in regard to all his commerce with the beings, which immediately surround him here? With him, faith, truth, virtue, goodness, justice are but empty names. What security can he expect for any thing he enjoys even here? For where faith and truth are utterly disregarded, all human laws and pacts can be understood to be nothing else, but an occasional cessation of encroachments and injuries, till some one has got power enough to oppress the rest. And since every man, who has no moral principle, may find frequent opportunities of injuring his neighbour, to his own seeming profit, being under no obligation but want of power; where-ever his fraud or malice can evade the force of human laws, the property of any man becomes his plunder, and his rights are the natural prey of superior cunning. It were a jest indeed, to talk

to

to him of right. It is undistinguishable from wrong, where it is supposed there is no foundation, in the nature of things, for truth, or justice. Thus the rejection of the belief of a future state, or after-reckoning, vindicates to itself, as it's legitimate offspring, all the misery and mischief, arising from violence, oppression, fraud, malice, and cruelty among mankind. The theory and practice are both of a piece: And hence we may conclude that, as the pains of sense, which are naturally inevitable, and necessary to be endured in the present constitution, have seemed to be still growing upon us, at every new step in the present section, so all the necessary pain and calamity, with which we mutually affect each other by our vice and folly, is morally inevitable, and must become of course more and more intolerable, upon the growth of irreligion, and the opinion of no after-state. This increasing sum of misery is rather to be imagined than expressed. For let it be observed that we are far more hurtful to each other by our vices, than we are helpful by our virtues; (retaining still the names of virtue and vice, the real distinction of which is lost upon this supposition.) For if a man be just, he does not indeed injure others, nor suffer them to be injured, if he can hinder it. But this is to affect them with pleasure negatively only. Whereas, if he be unjust, he affects them with real pain. It is far
from

from being true of pain, what the Cartesian philosophers assert of motion, that the same quantity of it is always preserved in the world. For the unjust man acquires not to himself all the pleasure, of which he deprives others; nor is he freed from a quantity of pain, equal to what he makes others feel. That pain, with which the tyrant affects thousands, may be the relief of no pain to himself. It may, it must, in the end, be the aggravation of his own. Our virtues have, many of them, no effect without ourselves, while their contrary vices spread calamity and wretchedness far and near. The chaste person really advantages himself alone, but others only negatively, while the opposite vice brings ruin upon families, overturns government, lays waste and enslaves whole nations; witness the consequences of the violated chastity of Lucretia, Virginia, Count Julian's daughter. In short, vice, with respect to pain, (to borrow once more a comparison from philosophy,) is like elasticity, with respect to motion: The effect of it is always to generate, or multiply the former quantity. But the moral consequences of the atheistical scheme, which are briefly hinted here, shall be taken more directly and fully into consideration in the next section; when we shall inquire into the rule of action of intelligent and free beings.

OBJEC-

OBJECTION I.

An objection, from natural prejudice, to the substance of this, and the foregoing section, meets us here, and demands our notice. Another, artfully opposing the conclusion drawn from them, shall likewise have it's answer.

1. It may be said ;—If it be certain that we endure such a vast excess of clear pain, in the present constitution of things ; how comes it to pass that we are so little sensible of it, or so little disgusted with existing ? Why should we obstinately continue in love with such a painful thing ; and not rather endeavour to throw ourselves out of life, or at least this period of it ? Is it not contradictory to common sense that we should be pained, and yet not feel the pain ; or that we should be pained, and yet not hate the thing that pained us ?——But if we advert, with due reflection, to our natural sensations, it will appear that it is no contradiction, with respect to bodily pain, that the mind should be often diverted from all perception of it. A violent or unusual attention to any thing else will hinder the sense of pain from getting access at that time to the percipient nature in us : And it is often the miserable advantage of a greater pain, that it drowns the sense of a less one. Some

men are grown so callous, both in mind and body, that because their attention is solicited by no new pain, they are ready to believe they feel none, being long habituated to their old pain. So early is our acquaintance with pain, so constantly are we accustomed to it, that a sense of certain actual pains appears to us the original and natural constitution of body. For, till we correct the prejudices of our mind by reflection, we think what we appear to have always known, is necessary and established in nature. Thus life, to many men, becomes a mere habit, without thought or reflection, the same as in brutes. Having an immediate feeling of nothing better, they recollect not, know not any thing better. It actually requires some thinking to be able to judge from what quantity of pain we must first be freed, before we arrive at indolence, or a perfect absence of both pleasure and pain. Besides, a fear of worse makes ill seem good, and the present moderate pain a kind of pleasure; this in some respect or other, either of something worse apprehended in the present period of existence, or in some unknown future period, is the prevailing and universal cause of our unwillingness to quit our present condition. There is no man so thoughtless, as not to have a notion of a state of greater possible misery than what he endures, some extreme cases excepted. It is not impossible that fear

of worse in a future period, may, even to the atheist himself, be one cause of wishing to continue in this. The hope of better comes in, to influence our desires and endeavours, no less powerfully and universally: Or rather, which is the most natural way of estimating human motives, when the hope of pleasure ceases to work upon us, the fear of pain succeeds, and makes us think the present condition pleasant.

2. In the believer's breast, this motive, hope, will naturally prove the prevailing one. The desire of existence, in him, will not only be inseparable from his rational nature, but will be always increasing, as he advances in a taste and experience of rational pleasure. To such a man indeed, the loss of existence must be so much the more a loss, as he loses the prospect of pleasure, after he has undergone the toil of attaining this prospect. The desire of any thing, if that thing be possible, naturally becomes hope: So that we continue tenacious of existence, in this period of it, by the force of hope, notwithstanding the incessant unbalanced pain which preys upon us. This truth will strike us the more forcibly, if we consider what must be the inclinations and desires of the man that has no hope. He who endures the pain we feel, without one glimpse of hope, given up to despair, to whose apprehension pleasure appears an impossibility, and present pain utterly inevitable,

evitable, and regarded as inseparable from his existence, such a man of course must hate existence as he dreads pain, and hate it in proportion, as his prospect of future pain appears more certain. If such a man could annihilate himself, (a contradiction of which he may not perceive the absurdity,) and throw himself out of existence, he must naturally be excited to attempt it. Nay, we may be sure that nothing could with-hold him from it, if parting with the present life were not apprehended to be a greater pain than what he endured ; or

*“ Did not the dread of something after death,
That undiscover’d country, from whose bourne
No traveller returns, puzzle his will,
And make him rather bear the ills he has,
Than fly to others that he knows not of.”* (c) —

Those who are supposed to have retained the full possession of their reason, at the time they violently put an end to their lives, from which all hope or comfort might appear utterly excluded, must, if that supposition be true, have considered death as an utter extinction of being. And then, who can deny they acted reasonably according to that principle? The effect of hope, in making us voluntarily endure pain, is familiar to our daily observation, and

(c) Shakespear. Hamlet’s Soliloquy.

feeling.

feeling. It is the nature of this affection of the mind to balance in the imagination, and compensate present suffering with future pleasure. And were it possible for the Author of our nature to be a deceiver, a creature so susceptible of hope, and so extravagant in it, as man is, might be drawn on to endure pain endlessly, without being out of love with existence.

3. To be somewhat more precise about the nature of hope, and fear.---If the attainment of a future good be imagined possible, by a natural necessity, we cannot but hope for the possession of it, and fear the not possessing it: Unless, on the one hand, the attainment of it be infallible; and then hope is perfected into certainty; or, on the other, the not attaining it be certain; and then fear is heightened into despair. The same obtains exactly with respect to the avoiding future evil. Our hope is great, as our desire is great; but it is reasonable only as the happening of a future good is probable. Let the same be applied to apprehended evil. We must not confound these two properties of hope; since their difference is founded in the nature of things; nor say that a man's hope is great, because it is reasonable, nor reasonable, because it is strong. For if the greatness of hope followed the degree of probability, we should never trespass the bounds of reason, by hoping things improbable: Or if
Y their

their being great implied their being also reasonable, an improbable thing might instantly become probable, upon it's being vehemently desired. Two men may have equal probability of attaining a certain good, yet have very different hopes of attaining it, proceeding from the different intensity of their desires. Those who deny the free agency of man may, if they please, consider this striking instance of it, that he can dwell, with ardent desire, upon the pleasantness of a future good, yet wilfully shut out the consideration of the small probability there is of attaining it: And he can be greatly disturbed by the dread of future evil, without adverting, as he ought, to the probability of it's happening. To apply this observation to the present purpose.--Where future pleasure is attainable, we are more apt to turn our thoughts to the consideration of the pleasure, the idea itself being agreeable to us, than to any reflection upon the chance of disappointment; that very consideration being painful. Our desire of pleasure thus increasing with our contemplation of it, and our hope with our desire, they naturally both together become greatly an overmatch for our fears. Nor, on the other hand, will the fear of future pain make us loath existence, in proportion as the love of pleasure makes us love it. The shunning pain is regarded as a kind of pleasure; and desire and hope will be working

ing here as effectually as in the former case : And in this respect too, our hopes naturally destroy, and are still gaining ground upon our fears.

4. We view our future pleasures, without viewing the pains that must attend them. Our whole lives are continual instances of this remark. But when we come to the enjoyment of expected pleasures, the pain is found substantial, and they imaginary. Yet new wants to be relieved, new conveniences to be attained, appear still in prospect ; and after labouring, with equal toil, to come at these new objects, we find them equally unsatisfactory. Thus is the life of man upon earth a series of fatiguing pursuits and mortifying disappointments ; where the hunting of pain in disguise is all the recompence he receives, for enduring of pain confessed ; and the memory of former disappointments is no discouragement to him to set up in his heart some new idol, the object of his present endeavours, and future expectations. It is very rare to see a man in a state so utterly destitute of hope, as not to look about for something barely possible, some object still desirable, still a reason for wishing to continue in existence : like a drowning man, who grasps at any thing, how weak Toever, rather than sink altogether. We look with a smile of pity on the fickleness, and inexperience of children. They are scarce in possession of their

desired play-things, but they are sick of them; and long for something else. Such silly children are we all; as ill observers of the natures of other things, and of what belongs to our own. Nor is all our experience a cure for the fond mistakes, which we thus delight in indulging. Even the man, who has run out his course of sensuality, and feels at last all the pleasure, to which he has been long devoted, forsaking him for ever, even he, whose wretchedness is confessedly extreme, wishes still to continue in that very disconsolate state; riveted to existence here, by the dark suggestions, in his mind, of something worse hereafter. In this portraiture of life, the atheist himself, may find his own case hit with the nearest resemblance. He is still hunting about, like other men, for something new to hope, some new reason for desiring to prolong his frail being; till having surmised his hopes, he drops his philosophical disguise, and in dread of greater misery, he clings wishfully still to present pain.

5. The man, whose sentiments and conduct are formed on the divine plan of life, of immortality, of reason and religion, will entertain sublimer hopes. Having made just and rational observations on the natures of things, having improved his mind so far, as to be satisfied by experience, that rational and moral pleasures alone are solid, permanent,

manent, and can never end in disappointment, he soon discovers the emptiness, and fallacy of other pleasures, and that all obstinate pursuits of these are finally frustrated of course. From these therefore he wisely withdraws his views betimes. He seeks no more from them than to procure the necessary intermissions, or alleviations of pain in this period, because he knows this is all they can, or should perform. He directs his aim to something beyond them, with respect to the endless enjoyment of which alone, it can be said that the rational nature was not made in vain : For the supposition, that this fair prospect will prove a mere illusion, directly contradicts the wisdom, and justice of an infinitely wise, and just Being.

OBJECTION 2.

This hope of rational, and endless pleasure in a future period has, in some atheistical tracts, been attacked, as illusory, by producing an imagined parallel, which with great ostentation, and pomp of argument, is pretended to be well adapted to expose the futility of it.

This hope, say they, of pleasure after death, is like the satisfaction a miser feels, who having hid his treasure in some secret place, hugs himself in full security that he has minded the main chance : He has something now to have recourse to, though all

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things else should fail him. If this private hoard be stolen, he is not a jot the poorer: He never misses, never wants it, until perchance he goes to look for it; which in our case, they say we cannot do. So that having no present use for it, he is just as happy, all the while, as if it were really there. And if he dies, thinking it still safe, the parallel is complete. For when we die, we have no use for, nor do we want our fancied happiness, being incapable of it, and all the while it helps to make us content and satisfied here. (c)

1. This parallel, and the application of it, are intended to represent our life, and condition of existence here, as a nice, and cunningly contrived cheat, which is never to be found out, since dead men can tell no tales. This is more than denying a good, wise, and just cause of our being: It is supposing a subtle and malicious author of it, who knows how to hide his malice and cruelty, so well, that we shall never be able to reproach him with it. This is something more than bare atheism. The infidel here starts aside from chance, from eternal

(c) This is somewhat of a piece with the argument of Lucretius.

—— Miser, O miser, aiunt, omnia ademit
Una dies infesta tibi tot præmia vitæ.
Illud in his rebus non addunt; nec tibi earum
Jam desiderium infidet rerum.——

Lib. iii. 7. 915.

succession, from his atomic or indolent deity. The atheist is here a declared anti-theist. Against the kind Father of the universe, he sets up a necessary evil principle; against eternal wisdom, and truth, impenetrable fallacy, and cunning; priding himself, no doubt, upon his own great sagacity, in discovering a deceit, contrived with such excellent subtilty, as to ensnare all mankind besides, for he will not surely pretend that any one could come from a state of non-existence, to reveal the illusion to him, any more than to reveal the reality of a future state, to the faithful believer.

2. But allowing the matter were just as it is represented in this parallel, what is their design who divulge, with so much zeal, this mighty secret; when all our earthly happiness appears to depend so much upon it's remaining still a secret to us? It shall be shewn in the next section, that the basis of all government, the very possibility of social and civil life, must be destroyed by a prevailing unbelief in a life after death. The very supposition of the parallel, allows that our ease and comfort, in the present period, are founded upon this pretended illusion. The man's treasure, though stolen, helps to make him happy: So our pleasure in prospect, though never attainable, is conducive to our quiet. With what design do they tell us this is all a trick? Do they wish to loosen the foundations of society? To raise

endless mischief and ruin among mankind, only to gratify their private vanity? If this be their design, they are more cruel than that evil being, who, according to them, brought us into existence, upon such disadvantageous terms; since they discover what he may have mercifully concealed; that we may be usefully and agreeably deceived. Were some unbelieving despot, some philosopher of their own principles, impelled by furious passions, and armed with power to oppress, pillage, torture, and massacre his subjects; how would they be able, in point of argument and reason, to divert or dissuade him? To alledge the injustice, or cruelty of such treatment, to plead their innocence, to insist upon the distinction of right and wrong, to urge the impending wrath of heaven, would be ridiculous in them, to one of their own persuasion. The consequences of their own principles could be retorted on them: That right, wrong, justice, or a just Being, who will take account of our actions hereafter—these are all mere chimeras of human invention. Such may be the language of impious men, whom prosperity swells with insolence and pride. No man finds himself atheistically inclined, in distress, under oppression, or injurious treatment. (*d*)

3. But

(*d*) Adversity is the hand of God, stretched out between man and vanity, “*that he may withdraw man from his*

3. But allowing yet, that our fancying we are destined to exist in a second period, pleasingly beguiles the wretchedness of our present state ; can it be inferred from thence that it really makes us happy, or even that it makes this life to be not miserable ? Our misery here, as our feelings convince, is not incompatible with the belief of our future existence : Nay our being inevitably subject to a balance of pain in this life is an unquestionable evidence, that our belief is not vain. Infinite justice does not obtain ; it is limited ; it is not infinite justice ; there is no such thing, no Being infinitely just, if one good man be miserable by the fault of another, and without redress.

4. In short, the case of the miser, and ours, are manifestly different in this : That we in the present life, voluntarily endure a portion of mental and bodily pain, in the rational hope of a compensation of future pleasure. This hope we find confirmed in our hearts, by the immediate suggestions of the Author of our nature : If it shall fail us after all, we have incurred that misery gratis ; we are so far cheated to our actual detriment. This is not the case of the man, whose stolen treasure continues still to afford him the same pleasure as before, not diminished in the least by the robbery. The

his purpose, and hide pride from man ;" as Elihu sublimely speaks, in his truly divine expostulation with Job.—Chapter xxxiii, verse 17.

parallel

parallel to our case would rather be this.— Let a man possessed of wealth and power engage a poor labourer, or any number of them, to serve a certain time, in fencing, manuring, digging, or ploughing his grounds; promising that, at the end of that time, they should receive a just payment for their trouble. Let him allow them only so much nourishment, rest and sleep, as may enable them to go through their daily work, struggling perpetually with the inclemency of the elements; and toiling, till their strength is exhausted. Yet chilled by the bitter blasts, pelted with hail-stones, drenched in rain, and spent with fatigue, they tamely endure it all, in prospect of a certain reward. If at last, this arbitrary lord, instead of paying them their wages, should seize them one by one, and instantly strike off their heads: The headless trunks, or severed heads, it is true, could not complain, that they have missed their reward, nor would it be of any use to them then. This point we freely give up to the assertor of annihilation. But he, in his turn, must confess, that the hirer of these poor deluded men must be a very unjust and cruel person. They have willingly undergone much misery, in consideration of what he has promised them shall certainly follow. If it follows not, he has ensnared them into misery, which he proposes never to compensate. Is not this the idea, which infidelity

delity presents us, of the infinitely just and good Author of all things? It is a plain and express denial of his existence. There is no medium between the doctrine of a future state, and downright atheism. All rational, as well as religious principles, are, by asserting the mortality of the soul, cut up by the roots; man is no more a moral or accountable creature; and there is no dependance to be had on eternal Truth. But it is enough that the maintaining that hypothesis arraigns truth itself,

SECTION VII.

The Supposition of the Mortality of the Soul is subversive of Morality, or incompatible with the right Rule of Action.

PROPOSITION I.

THE rule of action, to an intelligent being, upon either supposition, whether designed to exist in this period only, or endlessly in a future state, is to secure to himself all the pleasure, and to shun all the pain he can.

I. THIS appears incontestable. Pleasure, or happiness, is the universal end, and aim of all intelligent beings. To this we are borne by a natural propensity, before we have reasoned at all; and when we have reasoned, we tend this way still, in a manner generally consistent with our reasonings, and principles. Who would not justly oppose the dictate of reason, if it directed us to affect unbalanced pain and misery? To do this, it must evidently contradict itself. Our natural affections prevent all reasoning here; the desire of pleasure being confessedly a necessary part of our constitution. This desire is consequently agreeable to the design
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of the Author of our nature ; and the dictate of reason, concurring to indicate the same design, it becomes the rule of action to his intelligent creature, man.

2. But this general rule, in it's application to particular cases, will become two very different, or rather diametrically opposite rules, upon the different suppositions of our continuing, or not continuing to be the same conscious beings after death. For if man be designed for a future period of existence, or if it shall appear that he is a Being whose existence is naturally endless ; then the rule of securing to himself all the pleasure he can, if applied to his existence in this period only, without any respect to a future, may prove a most fallacious one. It may be the means of his incurring a greater portion of pain, and losing more substantial pleasure in that future period. And on the other hand, the undergoing, in this life, certain pains, necessary to be endured for the improvement and perfection of his nature, and so relative to future pleasure in a better life to come, would be the right method of applying the general rule of securing to himself all the pleasure he can. Rational and moral pleasures indeed, as they are perfective of human nature, and regard both parts of our existence, can never be pursued improperly, or to our final detriment. Yet, by daily observation, we find we may occasionally incur much present

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pain in these our most laudable pursuits. A more infallible pledge there cannot be of a happy compensation in a future state, than that voluntarily undergoing present pain is consonant to the highest faculty in our nature. On the contrary, the immoral and unprincipled sensualist, who seems proud of the imperfection of his nature, and whose conduct really tends to degrade it, nevertheless "*receives his good things*" in this life, like the rich voluptuary, in the gospel. If this be the whole of his existence, and he meet with no reverse in the course of his enjoyments here, can we say that his conduct, however immoral or irrational, has been improper, or unsuitable to his nature? Born to no higher destiny than the beasts that perish, can he be condemned for leading the life of a beast?

PROPOSITION II.

IF man be destined to exist in a future state, his rule of action will be to secure to himself all the rational pleasure he can; or all that pleasure only, which, being perfective of his nature, is relative to the happiness reserved for him in the life to come.

1. Rational and moral pleasures have been proved above, (and it will be proper always to bear it in mind,) to be the only pleasures proper to beings endlessly existing. The proper-

properties of these pleasures and that existence agree, and suit one another precisely. Every other pleasure is transient, ends in pain, and pain greater in proportion than the pleasure. This dispensation is exactly what must be expected to take place, upon the supposition that a Being infinitely just and rational governs the universe. Rational pleasure alone is not liable to satiety, decay, change, inconsistency with itself, or controlment from any other faculty. Reason is the commanding power of the soul; and the desire of happiness, inseparable from it, is it's reigning passion. The great scope and design of reason, if we suppose it given us by a designing Being, and not the mere effect of chance, is to direct us in the choice of pleasure, to point out the true means of happiness.

2. But in acting strictly according to the dictates of reason, much pain is found to be inevitable here. This present pain becomes eligible to reason; and is to be reckoned to the score of future pleasure, if the Ruler of the universe be perfectly wise and good. For it is incompatible with the nature of such a Being to have designed us for pain, uncompensated by a greater proportion of pleasure; or to have made the enduring such pain right and eligible, in the eye of reason. The desire of happiness is as necessarily, and unalterably, the supreme affection of the soul, as reason is it's supreme,
or

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or commanding faculty. It was not designed by their wise Author, that these should disagree, but that they should conspire for the good of his creatures. To deny this, is to deny such a Being altogether. It can never be right reason, which prompts us wilfully to endure pain, without prospect of a recompense. If it should be said, that the absolute command of God, for this purpose, ought to be complied with, devoutly, and without murmuring; it is answered, that it can never be the part of rational devotion, or true piety, to suppose it possible for the Deity to be unreasonable, and unjust in his commands. He cannot command what will not tend to the ultimate happiness of his intelligent creature; much less, "*if he shall ask an egg, will he offer him a scorpion.*" (e) The compensation for unmerited pain is sure. But it were a low estimate of this compensation, considering from whom it is expected, to suppose it to be a precise equivalent only to the pain endured. This may be thought enough to vindicate the justice of the Supreme Being; but would it vindicate his goodness, an attribute equally essential to him? Can we conceive the kind Father of the universe ordaining that his children shall be percipient of an equal quantity of pain and pleasure, and then cease for ever to exist, or that they should

(e) Luke xi. 11.

feel an equal proportion of both affections without end? Not to have brought them into existence would have been equal goodness, that is, no goodness at all. This reasoning holds with respect to every imaginable degree of pain. If it cannot be said that we were designed to be extremely miserable without a compensation, neither can we be designed to be miserable gratis, in any less degree. The pain therefore to be suffered here, in obeying the dictates of reason, must infallibly be followed by a preponderancy of pleasure in a future state. The moral attributes of the Deity are engaged for this. What implies a moral impossibility to be effected by the all-perfect Being, is as much impossible, as if the effecting it implied a physical contradiction. Let this be our ample security, that in cheerfully undergoing all the pain that is necessary to be endured in acting according to the dictates of reason, we are actually pursuing pleasure still.

PROPOSITION III.

THIS Rule is general; and extends as well to actions which have an influence upon the pleasure and pain of others, as to those, whose effects terminate solely in ourselves.

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1. IT is but the same rule of securing to ourselves all the rational pleasure we can, when with respect to others, it is expressed thus: That "*whatsoever things we would that men should do unto us, (if they were in our circumstances, and we in theirs,) we should do even so to them.*" (f) What our Saviour thus delivers, as the prime law of the Author of human reason, with respect to all dealings between man and man, must be consistent with the pursuit of rational pleasure. The improvement of our moral nature, if we were not often wretchedly inconsistent with ourselves, would constantly keep pace with our improvement of the rational: And our moral and rational pleasures would rise of course in the same proportion. On the contrary, the less rational we are, and the nearer we draw to the stupidity of the brutes, to whom there does not appear to be any moral rule at all, the less pleasure ought we naturally to find in this practice: For the pleasure seems compatible to rational beings only.

2. If an infinitely good Author of our nature could not have designed us for a state of pain, or for unnecessary pain, but for all the happiness, or pleasure possible, and consistent with his future views in our favour; the same goodness must have designed others for the same possible and

(f) Matt. vii. 12.

consistent

consistent pleasures, with ourselves. Their title therefore to an equal share of pleasure is as good as ours. The gracious design of the common Author of our being, our universal Benefactor, establishes both alike. In observing this rule of conduct towards others, we act according to his design and will; which being always absolutely right in all respects, the practice must be rational, and end in rational pleasure.

3. This rule of conduct, if generally observed, must appear precisely adapted to render each individual of the human species possessed of his equal portion of happiness, according to his capacity of enjoyment, which, as we have just seen, must have been the gracious design of our common Father. Beneficence and Justice would thus universally obtain. We now perceive upon what grounds our divinely commissioned Teacher says, "*this is the Law, and the Prophets*;" this is the abstract of natural and revealed Religion with respect to our dealings with our fellow-creatures; this is the summary of all social virtue. He manifestly declares it to be the great end of all Law, divine, as well as human, to bring men to this lovely equitable temper.

4. The reasonableness, the exact propriety of this rule of action, recommends itself powerfully to the heart of man, when he reflects that the infinitely wise and beneficent Author of his being, has plainly inti-

mated to reason, and revealed to the eye of faith, his purpose of perpetuating it's existence in a future state. With views thus happily enlarged, he can readily, in certain cases, defer and suspend his own private pleasure, in this short period, when they interfere, or are inconsistent with the good of other men. By extending the prospect far and wide into life immortal, he sees the possibility that the happiness of all the individuals of his species may be rendered perfectly consistent; though here their pleasures clash, and contradict each other at every instant. Rational delights excepted, the objects of all other pleasures are narrow and unsatisfactory. Men are aware how easily their sum is exhausted; and are therefore apt to grudge their share of them to others. From a concurrence of appetites, and pretensions, too naturally ensue debate, and strife. But a persuasion of the certainty of a future state, and the rule consequent upon it, teaches us to renounce present ease, and chearfully to embrace many pains, when conducive to the good of our neighbour, or the public welfare; reckoning them to the score of pleasure, or considering them rather as more eligible than ease and pleasure itself. The respect they bear to the designs of an infinitely beneficent Deity, which extend themselves, through this short span, into endless existence, is good security to us, that all the sufferings, which humanity and
virtue

virtue may occasionally prompt us to endure upon earth, will be abundantly rewarded, by the most ample compensation of enjoyments in a better life : And that these enjoyments will be such as will assuredly not fall short of our highest expectations, nor yield us less satisfaction, because other beings will partake of them in common with us, but infinitely more, upon that very account, which we have seen to be the peculiar excellency of rational pleasure.

P R O P O S I T I O N IV.

AS there is no deducing moral obligation upon the denial of a Deity, so there is no enforcing it upon the assertion of the mortality of the soul.

1. THE assertion that the soul at death is annihilated is an express denial that there is a good and wise Author of our nature, whose will, as being unerringly just and right, should be our rule of action ; or, which is the same thing, it maintains that he is not wise and good, with respect to us : Since he has given us an appetite for true and solid enjoyments, which he never designed to satisfy ; and since, with respect to his various gifts, which he has, munificently indeed, but with due limit, and proportion, distributed among the human species,

he has unconcernedly left us to scramble, every one for himself, and be his own carver, according to the law of the greater force, or the greater cunning and deceit. A rule of action supposes an unalterable respect to a law-giver, or one who prescribes it, as well as an account, regularly taken, (and to be settled at it's proper time,) in what manner it has been observed. If either of these be taken away, a rule of action becomes something utterly unintelligible.

2. Upon the supposition that the soul is totally extinguished at death, no moral rule of action can be properly enforced. Let it be here remembered, that great is the difference between the being persuaded that the soul is mortal, and the acting according to that persuasion, on the one hand; and on the other, observing the suggestions of a happy temper, or the dictates of right reason, in other respects, without forming any notion at all concerning the nature of the soul. Reason is always consistent with itself. It's greatest advances do not contradict the beginning of it's progress. By obeying it, we act consistently with the supposition of the immortality of the soul, though we should not have formally made that supposition. But to suppose the contrary opinion true, and to regulate our conduct in conformity to it, is manifestly to make reason support contrary principles and practices,

practices, to make it absolutely inconsistent with itself.

3. If there be no after-period of existence, the happiness and misery of all our species, with every thing, which can in any degree concern us, must all be crowded into the narrow space of the present period. All our appetites, and desires for pleasure are to be satisfied in this life, in which we may acquire a taste indeed, but cannot hope to give much satisfaction to our appetite for rational pleasures; and which affords them not sufficient room to have their full consequence. Besides, this wretched supposition deters us from pursuing these delights, though avowedly conducive to the perfection of our nature; because improved reason only serves to put us out of conceit with all that is to be enjoyed here, and kindle up an insatiable desire, in our breasts, of things lying without our span of existence, and so impossible to be attained. And therefore, of course, our views must be directed to the pursuit of such things as are empty, deceitful, unsatisfactory; and where, from the nature of the objects, there must be all that opposition and contrariety, which we constantly see between those, who hunt after them. Thus our pleasures, and those of others become inconsistent, and every man is left to shift for himself, as best he can, without any account to be exacted of him, how he has done it. And if he has,

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by any possible means, that can be named, however villainous or injurious, without the reach of punishment by human laws, secured to himself pleasure or profit, or what he esteems as such, he has secured them, in all the propriety of the word, for ever.

4. Reason, our controlling faculty, however we came by it, upon this supposition, is no farther applicable, than to provide for the wants of the body, and in this period only. There is not only now no obligation upon us to improve it, but we act not wisely, nor consequentially, if we do; since Reason, upon this hypothesis, is never to have it's proper consequences. We are no longer to regard it as the precious gift of a divine Providence, ordained to be the commanding faculty in our nature, to be pursued through an endless progress of improvement.

*" But cloud instead, and ever-during dark
Surrounds us, for the book of knowledge fair,
Presented with an universal blank,
And wisdom quite shut out." (g)*

We must now allow our reason to operate only as chance and sensual appetites direct, without launching into enquiries about it's original, use, and end. If we do, it lands us on a flat contradiction. Reason, upon the atheistical scheme, is of all things the most inexplicable. The following is but a small part of the string of gross absurdities,

(g) *Paradise lost*, B. III.

which

which it engages itself to maintain.—Reason is the effect of chance.---It leads us astray from the end of our existence.—The man, who does not improve it, cannot be condemned in reason.—It may be obeyed with bad consequences.—It may be disobeyed with no ill ones.---These propositions, all contradictory to reason, the Infidel supposes true; and in this manner, I repeat it, he makes Reason contradict itself. Reason, in short, is now no more that supreme ruling power, it had before been proved to be, upon the supposition of a future state. It becomes an insignificant, or very equivocal term, and stands for ideas as different, as contrary as the two suppositions themselves. This consideration intirely overthrows the rule of action, before established by the law of nature, and religion; and leaves nothing in it's stead, but an unguided appetite for pleasure in general; and what is worse, for any pleasure sooner than the rational. So that now the rule will be, (if it be proper to speak of a rule, where every thing is out of rule,) to secure to ourselves, by any means, any kind of pleasure, except rational. The horrid consequences of this have been hinted above, and will soon more fully appear, when we shall examine what must follow upon the supposition of a nation of unbelievers in a future state, living up to their own principles.

PROPOSITION V.

THE inconsistency of the pleasures of man, if his soul be mortal, cannot be contested; nor can it be alledged, that they could have been designed inconsistent, by a good and wise Being.

1. IF we deny any thing in this proposition, we must either say, that it is possible for men to be happy here in the attainment of pleasures, which are not consistent with the observance of rational and moral laws; a pretension, which, it is hoped, the arguments in the foregoing sections have abundantly disproved: Or it must be said, that men were not designed to be ever made happy; which denies a good and wise Author of our being. It is so plain that social happiness, and the observance of rational and moral laws, in the present period, are founded chiefly on the supposition of a future; that it is notorious, the first use bad men make of supposing the contrary, is to determine that then they may do what they list, and live without controul, there being no rule proposed, nor account to be given.

2. It is an impertinent caution, to forbid us to meddle with morality, and the rule of action, in arguing upon either supposition; as if they were equally fitted to the two

contrary

contrary opinions, or had no concern at all with either. That hypothesis, which infers the non-existence of the Deity, can never leave morality, or reason itself, standing as they were. It is an unphilosophical simplicity to imagine it: And when considered with attention, it will be found full of absurdity and contradiction. Why not examine the truth in all it's respects? Is there danger in any real truth? Certainly not; unless where men have precarious tenets to maintain; such as they suspect will not stand the test. Truth will endure all trials, and be the same truth still; and only the more evident, as viewed in a variety of lights. The truths here adduced manifestly assist, and mutually conspire with each other. This is surely what the common sense of mankind approves, in every sort of argument. Any thing inconsistent with what is already proved true, or with what cannot be contested, is rejected as false. And that position, or matter of fact, which cannot be imagined false, unless some other thing, evidently true, be imagined false also, is received as undoubted truth. Besides, if there were any danger in putting things to the last trial here, it would be ill dissembling in this case. What makes not for us, makes for the adversary. If they can shew that their hypothesis does not destroy the rule of action, or affect our social happiness; or that it leaves reason standing as it was; we may
consent

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consent to leave them masters of the field. They will find the task impossible.

3. Lucretius himself could not be so openly inconsistent with sense and reason, as to praise his disastrous scheme, for such a consequence resulting from it. He therefore, with an awkward affectation of zeal for the happiness and tranquillity of the world, affects to turn it to another light; that it means to free us from the restraints of religion, the fears of eternal punishment, the threatnings, and delusions of priestcraft,

“ ——— minis obistere vatum.

Æternas quoniam penas in morte timendum.” (b)

I defy any one to produce a more astonishing rant from any author, than his rapturous commendation of Epicurus, whom he stiles the glory of the Grecian nation, the father and inventor of things; and for what marvellous discovery after all?

“ *Naturam rerum baud divinâ mente coortam.*” (i)

Why should this discovery diffuse an universal cheerfulness, and serenity in the soul of man? And whence is that horrible dread, which he represents as overwhelming it, from the idea of an infinitely good, wise, and just Author of all things? What ill can be apprehended to mankind in general, from the

(b) Lib. I. v. 110.

(i) Lib. III. sub initio.

being

being under a rational government, and the having an equitable rule of action prescribed? Is it more eligible that men, with all their ignorance, and weakness, should be the supreme, the sole intelligent, and ruling beings in the world, than that a Deity, of unlimited power, and infinite perfections, should regulate, and preserve all things right in the universe? It is a disgrace to human reason, or rather to the human heart, whose perverseness has so basely corrupted that noblest gift of heaven, that occasion should have been given, to put such a question. But he complains, in the passage above-cited, that from the notions of the being of a God, and a divine providence, the Vates denounce eternal punishments after death. Yet surely they never said that any men had reason to fear punishment, unless they were wicked. And is it then for the interest of mankind, that wicked men should have no punishment to fear? This is discarding the rule of action pretty explicitly, to glory in the exemption from it, as the precious consequence of his system. The observation, which the reflecting reader will naturally make upon such passages, is, that it is no injustice to this dangerous hypothesis, to expose the absurdity of it, from those very consequences, of which it's greatest patron boasts so highly.

PROPOSITION VI.

THE equitable rule proposed is the only consistent measure of action, to ourselves, as well as to others.

1. ALL that a reasonable man can want in a rule of action, is to discover a safe and ready way of acting rationally : For we must suppose him willing to act so, when once he discovers the rule. The occasional change of persons, and circumstances, in our thoughts, is the most compendious method imaginable. It can never leave us ignorant of our duty, if we be not willing to catch at pretences for not complying with it. The great danger, to be obviated here, is lest self-love should make us hard-hearted, or relentless to others ; and this supposed change of places makes even that strong passion act for them. So it at once becomes the measure of action to ourselves, and to others in the same case ; than which nothing can be conceived more effectual to prevent the danger, and inconveniency apprehended. This rule, considered as the injunction of an Almighty Law-giver, is precisely fitted for the mutual relief of the distresses of mankind among themselves. It sets all that is human in us at work, for the common good ; making even self-love act, in regular conformity

formity with compassion and tenderness. As to the expectations of the persons, whom we are thus excited to relieve; we may observe that it is the nature of distress, and misery, to make men more reasonable in their desires. Necessity relieved brings indeed more satisfaction, and gladness of heart, than added heaps of superfluity. If others will but do for us, what they easily may do, without hurting, or endangering themselves, we are commonly thankful; and allow that we have been kindly treated. Much prosperity, unacquainted with affliction, will make the soul delicate, impatient, unreasonable in it's expectations: Other men may be apt to state their measure too narrowly; but experienced wretchedness will soon lower their exorbitancy. Equity, in the mean time, will be attentive to keep the balance even; while charity, and generosity are habitually prompted to allow them a turn of the scale in their favour. In matters of business, of pure equity, and justice between man and man, where distress, with respect to either party, is out of the question, no man, I believe, will seek a handle for carping at the rule; since no man can wish to be unjustly dealt with.

2. So obvious, after all, is the equity of this rule, and so striking the propriety of securing to ourselves rational pleasure in general; that the observance of this practice, and this rule, is commonly allowed to be
pleasant,

pleasant, by our adversaries themselves. They will even contend that it is equally proper upon their supposition, as upon that of a future state; since it is only securing pleasure to ourselves of one kind still. But alas! where is the incentive to improve the rational nature in us; where the obligation to obey the generous dictates of morality, upon the gloomy supposition of the atheist? Is it not impertinent to talk of approving a practice, by establishing a position manifestly tending to disparage it; to pretend they never mean to dissolve the obligation of a rule, when they declare they reserve to themselves the liberty of breaking it at pleasure?

PROPOSITION VII.

REASON, and the supposition of the mortality of the soul, do not accord; because, upon that supposition, reason may often be disobeyed with no ill consequences, and obeyed with no good one.

1. It is in vain for the unbeliever to pretend he does not depreciate reason more than other men, nor maintain any of those horrid positions, which have here been proved necessarily to follow from his assertion. The ready way to justify himself, will be to shew the weakness of those arguments, which tie such monstrous consequences

sequences to his assertion. If we indeed mistake his intention ; if he does not assent to these conclusions, nor see how justly they are deduced from his tenets, we may admit his plea of ignorance, for an excuse. But we must compassionate his blindness still, and warn him of their dangerous tendency.

2. The man, whose existence is supposed to be finally closed in death, after a life of prosperous villainy, or undetected fraud ; who never made use of his reason, but to oppress the weak, or circumvent the simple securely, is as free from any ill consequences, as he, to whom it's moral dictates were most sacred, and whose most scrupulous observance of the laws of conscience, of religion and virtue has exposed him to much uncompensated misery. He has remarked but little, or not reflected properly upon the lives of men, to whom instances of both kinds will not occur. It is nevertheless truth, and a just representation of the purport of this notion of the infidel ; though it should be shewn, that in general, the event is quite otherwise ; and that poetical, or equal justice commonly prevails, with respect to good ; and bad men, in this life. The exceptions, or contrary instances, that will present themselves to the recollection of every observing man, are more than sufficient for the present argument.

3. Not to improve reason, not to obey it, can never be reasonable, by the terms ; and

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to improve, or obey it, can never be hurtful, if the world be under the government of a divine Providence. Yet the *atheistical* system supposes these contradictions possible, and often true in fact. These contradictions it is their business to reconcile. Their supposition having resigned the reins to an unguided appetite for pleasure in general, rejects reason as the faculty, which should controul us in the choice of pleasures, retaining it only as the slave of sense, or at best the substitute of instinct.

4. The system of utter extinction at death is termed *atheistical*, in the last paragraph. It is manifestly such, in it's immediate consequences; which by impeaching the wisdom and goodness of the Deity, in effect deny his existence. The most noted of our modern deists (*k*), as we complaisantly stile them, from their pretending still to believe a God, basely attack his moral attributes, with dark innuendos, and subtle witticisms; conscious that when infinite justice is once thrown out of the question, the doctrine of a future state, and day of account, with the ground of all moral obligation must fall with it. Against this wretched mock-philosophy, suited to the taste of the unprincipled slaves of fashion, and riot, it may be in vain to oppose sober argument, and reason. It will still persist in denying every thing that can be asserted, every thing that can be demonstrated. It is the denying the necessary

(*k*) Bolingbroke, Voltaire, &c.

necessary cause of all things. It is therefore the denying every thing, truth, reason, demonstration. It is equivalent to the assertion of an universal non-existence, an absence of all being, and affections of being. This ugly blot in their system not all the water in the ocean will wash away. I have not misrepresented their assertion, in affixing to it consequences, which it does not absolutely engage itself to justify. But it is really a precise impossibility to be injurious to it.

5. The patrons of the mortality of the soul will impudently boast, that among their sect, they can number some of the best of men, the most moral, the greatest ornaments and supports of civil society; and that, among the maintainers of the immortality of it, are to be found some of the worst men in practice, and the basest in every respect. Allowing these inconsistencies to exist in the profession, and practice of men; all this does not alter, in one jot, the hurtful consequences of the notion of the mortality of the soul, nor the salutary ones of it's immortality. The evil practices of men affect not the immutability of Truth. If a man, out of an humour of maintaining paradoxes, should take it into his head to assert, that nothing in nature was poisonous; and yet, at the same time, should be as cautious as other men, to taste nothing, but what was safe; this would not

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make his assertion the less absurd, or frantic; or the less mischievous, if it chanced to obtain credit. It could only be said that his practice, and assertion, were contradictory to each other.

6. Once more, let us candidly allow, that they, who maintain the mortality of the soul may not have enough adverted to all the genuine consequences of their own principles. But principles are not the less hurtful, because men are not aware of all the mischief, they are naturally adapted to bring about. Is it the innocent nature and tendency of these principles, or something else, that we are to thank, that the world has not felt the effects of them long before now? The practical Atheists are left to apply them to all their purposes. Speculative men advance principles, on which the others, and themselves far more than they are aware, found their actions. And who can tell how far their set of principles, their renunciation rather of all principles, is necessary to all the turmoil, all the crimes, and thence productive of almost all the misery, under which the world is groaning at this day? The cunning practical atheist may seem to break no squares with the simple part of mankind, by pretending to believe as they believe; yet securely shrouded, in his own mind, from the resentment of heaven, by his secret infidelity, may be indifferent how far he may involve other men in trouble, and ruin, to attain
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his own ends. This is more than barely possible. What follows is unquestionably certain: that an uniform practice, conformable to the contrary belief, would at once remedy all the disorders of the moral world. Do but consider one moment, O speculative Atheist, the different tendency of thy scheme, and that of the true believer.

Though the arguments in the foregoing propositions are easily applicable to the answering any objections, that can be raised against them; yet as some may want to see them formally applied, the principal objections shall be here examined.

OBJECTION I.

The most solid rule of action, it is said, and which, after all, is alone attended to, is a Code of equitable and just laws, contrived by human wisdom: This may be effectual to all the purposes of the present life, all the ends of civil society, and good government, without any respect to a future period.

To a superficial thinker this objection may seem specious. But a little attention is sufficient to discover the fallacy, and inconsistency of it.

1. Let him consider that, wherever a rule of action may be broken, with impunity, it can never be established, as a rule to those,

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who have power and cunning enough to secure them from penalty, after they have broken it. If any man may break it securely on these terms, it cannot be regarded properly as a rule at all, but to those alone, whose righteous inclinations require no legal curb, or who want power and cunning to gratify them securely against law: that is, it is disregarded as a rule and restraint by those especially, the restraint of whom was the chief intent of it's establishment.

2. A rule of action should be armed with a coercive power, extending to all those, who are to be governed by it. How shall we apply it universally in this case? Men are those who are to be governed by the rule. Men are those also, who have the coercive power of the rule in their own hands. If men should transgress it themselves, having the power to remit the penalty, is it to be expected that they will be exact in inflicting it? What now becomes of the sanction of the law? Where is the nature, where the effect of it? If a view of obtaining some fancied good, with impunity, in a breach of the law, shall present itself, the intent of the law, with respect to all men, is defeated, and it becomes a bar only against the injuries, and encroachments of the weak, a security to the strong, the powerful, the cunning, from the assaults of those, who are least likely to do them harm. Thus we see the
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the most inoffensive men oppressed with the greatest inhumanity; especially under corrupt, and ill-administered governments, where the laws are nevertheless confessedly established with peculiar wisdom. Under colour of the laws themselves, intended for their protection, we see them but the more exposed to the insults, and cruel treatment of men, who superior in force and fraud, escape the vengeance due to their crimes: And here, if there be no after-state, the misery of the one, and the impunity of the other must be final. This boasted code, in short, can be no consistent rule, but little better than the name, the shadow of a rule; without supposing that a Being, of infinite wisdom, justice and power will rectify this disorder, and compensate this wrong. The conception of a divine superintendency, and a future day of account, is therefore necessary to establish a perfect rule of action. We are struck with glaring inconsistencies, at every instance, in the scheme opposed to it. Should those, who are entrusted with the legislature, or the executive power of human laws, be impeccable, (which it is plain mankind has not supposed, by the ineffectual fences they are daily struggling to raise against the pernicious effects of their mal-administration, in all nations not yet reduced to a state of desperate slavery;) yet should we suppose them always upright, in

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their intentions at least, how miserably defective are they, at the best, in knowledge and power to exercise due equity and judgment?

3. It is not denied, that the regular observance of just and equitable human laws might redress this wrong in a great degree. But to say that if all men would agree in a punctual obedience to these laws, the world would go on well enough, is just as wise as to say, that if men did not stand in need of human laws, or did no wrong, all would be right. We do not act against the rule of equity, for want of knowing what it is. If we were but willing to act aright, conscience, and common sense would generally inform us what we are required to do, or not to do, for the good of society, as they now direct lawgivers what laws to make. The restrictive, and coercive power of the law, to regulate the actions, and determine the will of men, in the present state, is the great thing wanting, to make their conduct uniformly just, and rational. But for this, the influence of human legislation is found much too weak.

4. Human laws are but the general law of reason, enforced by the authority of men, in their dealings with each other, as far as these can be brought to public notoriety. Now whatever dissolves the natural obligation of this general law, dissolves it in all particular cases, however enforced by hu-

man sanctions. But we have already seen that the denial of a future state, takes away the foundation, and so dissolves the obligatory nature of the only universally rational, and moral rule, by denying a divine Law-giver, and every thing indeed, which can be advanced, in support of that rule. It is a downright contradiction, which the infidel endeavours to palm upon us, when he says that laws merely human, are just and reasonable; at the same time supposing the foundation of justice and reason, the eternally just and wise Author of all being, taken away.

5. Though the most equitable, and rational rule were enacted in form, by human authority; the reasons for it being taken away, it would cease to be a reasonable rule. He, who violates the rule, has only to see how he may escape the punishment from men, and all is well. So inconsistent is the atheistical defence of the all-sufficiency of human laws, which rescinds the great sanction of the law of the Author of nature, and reason. When they tell us that human legislators make reasonable, or equitable laws, they will not surely have the presumption to add, that men make the reason, or the equity, on which these laws are founded. They may enforce reasonable practices, by their authority: But by the terms, these practices were reasonable, before they enjoined them; and the observance of them
would

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would have been reasonable, though they had not been enjoined at all. If there were no danger that men would act unreasonably, there would be no need of human sanctions to enforce the law of reason. (k) It would obtain universally.

6. Thus it appears, that this expression, *just laws, made by the contrivance merely of human wisdom*, is but a jumble of inconsistent ideas, when these laws are conceived to be contrived in exclusion of any higher obligation, or independent of an infinitely wise Author, and Ruler of the universe. Is it not astonishing that the reason, justice, wisdom, discovered here below, should not, to all men, be a most evident demonstration of the existence of a Being, just, wise, and rational, the Fountain and Author of all wisdom, justice, and reason? It is certainly as good an argument, that because there is such a thing as justice, in the nature of man, or of things, as caused, there must exist a just Being, it's eternal Cause, and Author, as it is, that because there are marks of power, goodness, knowledge in the material world, there must be a powerful, good, and know-

(k) Horace himself confesses this:

'Jura inventa metu injusti fateri necesse est.'

Injustice is nothing but an unintelligible term, without it's correlate justice, which, if supposed to exist at all, must, like Truth, be eternal. The poet, like the rest of his inconsistent sect, was unmindful here of the tenets of his philosophy, though a professed Epicurean, a little before:

'Cum prorseperunt primis animalia terris.' Lib. I. Sat. 3.
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ing Being, the author of it. Is there not some strange perverseness, that prevents the infidel from yielding, or attending to the evidence of this argument, which must be always obvious, and at hand, since otherwise, the greatest perfections possible, reason, justice, wisdom, should be the effects of nothing. It is received as a general axiom, and always necessary in reason, that the cause should be more perfect than the effect. It is even repugnant to all our conceptions, that an infinitely perfect Cause should produce an infinitely perfect effect; since this must be something independent on himself, no effect, but an uncaused Being. An effect is always limitedly perfect. And in other things we always see the effect degenerate from the perfection of it's cause; and the farther we go on in a train of effects, the more imperfect the last effect is. But in the philosophy of the atheist it is quite the contrary of this. The effect rises always above the perfection of it's cause: And contrary to demonstration and common sense, *the effect of an effect is more perfect than the first-cause!* Reason, wisdom, justice, are the effects of motion in matter, which is the effect of chance, which is—nothing. Thus, after all this insolent and haughty boasting, we are paid off at last with absurdities, and unmeaning terms, instead of rational philosophy, which might make us wiser and better men. This impossibility,
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that the effect may be more perfect than it's cause, runs through the whole scheme of the infidel. If this be false and contradictory, the atheistical system is manifestly so, without more words. But if it be not false and contradictory, we can be certain of nothing, reason about nothing, conclude nothing. What is there in chance, or atoms, confessedly not rational, equal in perfection to reason? This makes me repeatedly say that reason, truth, wisdom, justice, goodness, upon the atheistical scheme, are nothing but mere insignificant, unintelligible sounds: And this makes it necessary to deduce all real perfection in the natures of things, from the nature, and ideas of the necessarily existing Being; and makes it still necessary, upon the supposition of the non-existence of that First-Cause, to suppose all these things to go out in darkness, and disappear for ever. We cannot conceive truth eternal, and immutable, (as all truths are,) and yet existing in no mind: nor perfections eternally possible, without a Being to whom they are possible. It is a great short-sightedness in reason, and philosophy, to imagine that the consistency of the natures of things could stand, the Author of their natures falling; an inadvertency, a child might be ashamed of. So horridly unnatural and foolish is the supposition of the infidel! All things, in short, that exist, are indissolubly connected with the existence of the

the necessary First-Cause: And this truth we may thus bring home to our present purpose, in the following Queries:—Does the mere will alone of the human legislator give birth to wisdom, constitute justice, make truth? How could laws be just, be reasonable, be wisely contrived, the necessary Support and Foundation of these perfections being taken away? Do these men add perfections to the natures of things, which were not in nature before?—So could a sett of chess-men, coming to exist, without any cause, invent their own movements, and the laws of the game.

7. Human laws, though ever so wisely made, and carefully put in execution, cannot, upon the supposition that there is no higher rule of right, and wrong than they, be an adequate, and effectual rule of action, because they have, for their object, actions only, and not the sentiments, and principles of the mind, which are the source of innumerable actions of men, to which human laws can never extend, and against which they can make no provision. Very great, in truth, is the difference to a society, between having all it's members engaged, by human regulations, barely to comply with the letter of the law; and their observing it faithfully from an internal principle. A thousand circumstances occur every day, not comprehended under the tenor of the laws of human institution, in which the
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general law of reason, and principle, will make a good man act as strictly, and righteously, as if these cases were expressly specified, yet where, without the supposition of a higher obligation than human law, they are at liberty to act otherwise. In a word, the citizens, or subjects of legal government, become, by one of these obligations, circumspect knaves only; but by the other, really honest men.

OBJECTION 2.

IT is arrogant to bring in the Deity as interesting himself in taking a strict account of the actions of such petty creatures as men:

1. THIS objection lies disguised, under the pretence of a refinement in philosophy, and teaching juster notions of the Deity. Unrestrained by principle themselves, some conceited coxcombs, ancient, and modern, have impudently assumed the air, and character of philosophers; affecting to pity our simplicity, and correct our nursery prejudices. They tell us, that the nature of the Supreme Being is so far exalted above human concerns, that it is folly to imagine our actions can be pleasing or displeasing to him; the consequence of which is, that every man is left to his own guidance, to act as his own inclination directs. The ignorance

rance of these wretched pretenders to refinement, has been marked, and all they advance, in shew of argument, obviated, in Section I. No. 15--19. Without repeating what is noticed there, we may farther observe, that nothing but want of ingenuity, on the part of the adversaries of religion, or want of sense in some of it's weak adherents, can literally apply to the Deity those expressions of a disquieting affection, displeasure, anger, &c. Dare the former of these, (though disgusted, not without reason, at the ridiculous rants of some enthusiastic preachers,) dare they undertake to prove, there is any thing unreasonable, or derogatory from the divine perfections in this notion: That a Being infinitely wise and good so directs the world, that justice, order, harmony shall finally prevail? Is there any improper idea in this conception: That God so governs his free creatures, that notwithstanding they enjoy the perfect use of their freedom, and frequently abuse it to unreasonable ends; yet all tends regularly to the wisest, best purposes; and that the admirable winding up of the great drama, as well as the conducting it throughout, affords infinite satisfaction to his supremely perfect mind? Is this, in their esteem, a work unworthy *Deo vindice*? In opposition to this, they will find themselves engaged to maintain the following palpable contradictions.—
Our rational and moral nature is not the effect

fect of this First-Cause.—He gave it not to be the ruling part of our constitution.—He gave it us without design.—It was his design it should not be obeyed.—What is not his design shall finally prevail. Each of these absurdities is indissolubly twisted into every part of their system. Thus in point of strict argument, the matter may be brought into a narrow compass. Their pretence of consulting the tranquillity and ease of the Deity, obliges them equally to exclude him from the creation and superintendency of the material world. This is to bring back all things again to atoms, and emptiness, *verbis ponere, re tollere deum*, to compliment him into nothing. It were just as philosophical to think of arguing time out of eternity, or place out of immensity. Time, place, all nature is intimately known and present to him, and all things, not implying contradiction are the objects of his power. Ease and difficulty may be significant words, applied to other agents: but they lose all propriety, applied to infinite power. For this reason, it was concluded, in Sect. I. that the multiplicity of things to be done cannot distract, nor their minuteness perplex him.

2. The infidel is not only inconsistent with himself in this point, but is perpetually at odds with his fraternity. One artfully pretends to own the being of a God, after having denied his providence; another,

ther, flatly denies him for good and all ; because he does not superintend the affairs of the world, as he would have him. (1) The latter is, of the two, the less inconsistently in the wrong. For if, after such disorders in human life, such cruelty and injustice exercised here, such flagrant crimes, or deviations from the right rule of action, the soul at death becomes nothing, it is plain there is no such rule subsisting, nor any such Ruler ; since then his justice is nothing, his goodness nothing, and his wisdom nothing. And the reality of these being concluded for the same reasons, and from the same necessity that his physical perfections were, this conclusion is thus set aside, and the whole nature of this Being becomes unreal, and disappears in reason and philosophy. He is defective in power and knowledge, or depraved in will ; which cancels all. This is somewhat of a piece with the absurdity noticed in No. 44. of Sect. I. Only as that was

(1) This is precisely the argument of Momus, in Lucian, advanced in favour of Epicurus : Καὶ μὰ τὴν Θέμιν, ὅτε τῷ Ἐπικύρῳ ἀξίον ὀργίζεσθαι, ὥτε τοῖς ὁμιληταῖς αὐτοῦ, καὶ διαδόχοις τῶν δογμάτων, ἐν τοιαῦτα πειρῶν ὑπελήθασιν· ἢ τί γὰρ αὐτὸς ἀξιώσει τις αὐτὸν φρενεῖν, ὅποταν ὁρῶσι τοσαύτην ἐν τῷ βίῳ τὴν ταραχήν, καὶ τὰς μὲν χρηστὰς αὐτῶν, ἀμειλιμένους ἐν πείνῃ, καὶ νόσοις, καὶ θύλῃ καταφθερόμενους, ταμπονήρας δὲ, καὶ μίαντες ἀνθρώπων, περ- τιμωμένους καὶ ὑπερπλητύνοντας, καὶ ἐπιταττόντας τοῖς κρείττοσι, καὶ τὰς ἱερὰς ὁδοὺς ὁλοκαυτόμενους, ἀλλὰ διαλανθάνοντας, ἀνασκοποῦμένους δὲ, καὶ τυμπανίζομένους ἐνίοτε, τὰς ἐδὲν ἀδικήτας ; εἰκότως τοίνυν ταῦτα ὁρῶντες, (οἱ ἄνθρωποι), οὕτω διανοῦνται περὶ ἡμῶν, ὥς ἐδὲν ὁλῶς ὄντων, (οἱ ἐνόημαί μιν), as he says before.) Jup. Tragedus.

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said to resemble a denial of all the axioms of a mathematical science, and then pretending to assert the truth of the propositions confessedly founded upon those axioms: so, in the present case, the sophist, imagining he can discern a flaw in a single proposition, runs boldly backward, denying peremptorily all the former propositions, that led to the demonstration of this, and then concluding that, of course, all axioms, and first principles must be swept away together. It is true, God does not govern the world according to his model, or as he would have it. It is extreme folly and insolence in him to expect it. What contradiction and confusion would that introduce into the divine government? How many would the Deity be able to please? What made one believe him wise, and good, would revolt another from the belief of him. The methods of infinite wisdom are steady and regular: But they take in a vastly comprehensive range of connections, and dependencies, unknown to us, all provided for at one view. Their course is like that of a broad and deep stream, that moves calmly on, without discovering the least ruffling, or impediment from the pebbles at the bottom of it's channel. Divine Providence does not free us from present pains of body and mind, according to our impatience, nor punish our enemies for the wrongs they inflict upon us, in compliance with our vengeful temper. But
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both the one and the other, and all things else, are better ordered, as we shall one day assuredly see and own. (m)

OBJECTION 3.

IT is best entirely to let alone the assertors of the mortality of the human soul; since public notice only renders them the more conspicuous, and of greater consequence.

1. WHAT a tragical cry is here made? says the infidel, with a treacherous smile. Must all the world be going to wreck, because a speculative notion is advanced against an established tenet of priests, and their followers? Opinions, like fashions, rise and fall. Is a little singularity, in contemning vulgar prejudices, a crime of so great a magnitude?—It is answered, first, that the asserting the mortality of the soul is by no means asserting a notion merely speculative.

(m) In Mr. Baxter's *Matho*, and his *Inquiry into the nature of the human soul*, the reader, who is able and willing to be at the pains requisite to understand the full force of his argument, cannot, I think, fail to find sufficient proof that the power and wisdom of God is perpetually exerted upon the matter of our bodies, and universally upon every atom of matter in the universe. Since then his providence is incessantly displayed in the growth of every hair of our heads, is it not extreme stupidity to suppose the moral actions of his creatures can possibly escape his notice?

Very far, in truth, it is from being a matter of indifference what we believe about it. Our belief of it's mortality, or immortality, will naturally influence our actions, and discover itself, when the unreflecting mind may be least aware, in our daily practice. What other belief can be of equal importance with this, to the due regulation of our conduct in life, and the good of society? Even that of the existence of an Almighty Ruler of the universe is not of greater, not of so immediate moral concern: Since if it be possible absolutely to disbelieve a future state, retaining still some notion of a Supreme Being; our concern in him would be very inconsiderable indeed, when it is supposed we have it always in our power to place ourselves out of the reach of any dependance upon him. It is not conceivable that a man of reflection should fail to consider the nature of his actions, with respect to what he believes will be the duration of his existence. If he confines his hopes and fears to this hand-breadth of being, he may be sometimes over-awed perhaps, by other temporary considerations, from squaring his conduct according to this belief: Yet the main tenor of his thoughts and actions will generally be according to that model: He will be filled with indignation, that he dares not speak out; cherishing an inward rancour against priests, and their followers, whose established superstition restrains him. This will

will put him upon all the indirect methods, he can invent, to propagate the tenets of infidelity. It is really thus that Atheism, and the belief of the mortality of the soul, first insinuate themselves into the hearts of unprincipled men, and are sily communicated far and wide to the heads of weak ones, at this day. The arrogant airs, which the unbeliever assumes, as if his superior reason was oppressed by prejudice and bigotry, takes with the unwary. And thus he manages a kind of reputation underhand, as if he, and his sect were the only generous patrons and protectors of reason; while they are subverting, (as it has been shewn,) all consistent rules of practice, leaving nothing in their stead but force or fraud; and indirectly maintaining, that permanent, moral, and rational pleasures are not adapted to the nature of human beings. If the embracing, and propagating such notions be not the endeavouring to drive all things to wreck, nothing is.

2. With the same artful and treacherous sneer, the objector persists, that the busy part of mankind trouble their heads very little about these metaphysical points, scarce ever hearing, or listening to them at all, when dinned in their ears from the pulpit: It is private advantage alone, and the common interest, that keep them tolerably right in practical things in the main. It is ridiculous to think of driving these

plain folks into the depths of philosophy, who will follow no other principle of thought, or action, but their own common sense. There is a mixture of truth in this impertinence. Private interest, and the common safety, natural conscience, and a sense of decency, will retain a certain influence upon the conduct of men, even in countries where the contagion of his notions are epidemically spread. Nay, I am ready to add, for our mutual comfort, that when the infection of his philosophy shall be found greatly alarming to the public welfare, and security, it is probable that states and kingdoms will find themselves obliged to employ the civil sword in wholesome amputations. But can any thing more convincingly manifest the absurdity of the notion of the Infidel, as well as it's pernicious consequences, than that if it once should come to be openly professed, the common good of mankind would oblige them to declare the professing it criminal, and to use the gibbet, or the pillory as the proper arguments against it? A very easy and familiar conviction, this, that the belief of a future state is absolutely requisite to preserve us tolerably secure, and happy here. What now is the *true* philosophy? All Truth is ever conducive to happiness, and nothing but the truth is so in the end. The most illiterate, and unphilosophical of the objector's plain people of business, may here

get a cheap view of the salutary effects, nay, the indispensable necessity of the belief of the immortality of the soul. And can it then be imprudent, or superfluous, to endeavour, every one in his own way, to prevent things from coming to an extremity, that must render this unwelcome severity expedient? Let it be done, with the mercy of God, if it can be done, with reason and mild argument. It is certainly better, where no force is applied, but that of reason, and where a man is made to see his own mistakes, by sober and friendly argument, than that either he, or other men should feel them.

3. But to pursue this particular, how far society and civil life are concerned in the present debate, a little farther. Let us suppose that there were a whole nation of such men, as all made profession of atheism, and the disbelief of a future state. What kind of polity, or government could we suppose them able to maintain? What laws could bind them? Or by what possible regulation could they preserve themselves mutually secure one from another? If it be supposable that they could frame a wise and compleat system of laws for their mutual safety, what could they complain of, should any number of the community, secure from the vengeance of heaven, cunningly evade the intent of these laws, or possess themselves of power to throw every thing into confu-

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sion? Would they accuse those, who overturned their constitution, of injustice, or breach of faith? What is faith? (Let me repeat the question,) What is justice upon their supposition? Might not their own principles be retorted upon them? Would not the commonly received notion stop their mouths? It would be told them, that they were returning to their old prejudices, an exploded and condemned philosophy; that they fancied they were still in a state, where an after period was supposed true, and where faith, virtue, justice were foolishly imagined to be something more than empty sounds, having a reality annexed to them, in the nature of things. That according to the present condition of humanity, and the approved refinements of philosophy, these are but metaphorical expressions, terms borrowed improperly from the other system, tolerated abuses of language only. If a remonstrance were made to him, who had broken through their established pacts and conventions; that every one had an equal claim to his share of pleasure, and an equal right to an exemption from pain: He might tell them that was their affair, not his: He was guardian only of his own concerns and pleasures: That if there was a deficiency of the comforts and conveniencies of life, or if his happiness required, that some of them should be miserable, that was the fault of the constitution of things, not his: That

he was to endeavour, by all the industry and address he was master of, that the defects of the constitution should incommode him as little as possible: That every one might make what shift he could; but that he was resolved to defend, by all means, the enjoyments he possessed. To this reply, backed with power, what argument could be valid? To call his conduct exorbitant, unreasonable, or him unjust, perfidious, to remind him of the duty of being a good citizen, an honourable, or exemplary member of the community, would be a downright laughable simplicity, under such a constitution, as established private interest for the sole rule of action.

4. What one man thus deems himself warranted to practice by force, for his own pleasure merely, against the happiness of other men, or the welfare of the society in general, that openly professes to ridicule the notion of an after-reckoning; this, every other member of it is at liberty to practise by fraud and cunning. So that if the total dissolution of such a community should not take place, it must be owing to its members acting, in general, conformably to the contrary belief. The very banditti, or gangs of robbers themselves are forced to borrow the cement of their society from the sacred nature of truth and fidelity, though in other respects, they act in contradiction to these. Thus the circumstances of a people professing

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sing infidelity, being fairly examined, are a fresh confirmation, that the subsisting, or very possibility of social union among men, is firmly twisted with the belief of the immortality of the soul. All regulation of manners, conducive to the welfare of men, is founded upon that supposition. A nation could no sooner agree to form itself upon that unhappy plan, but struck with a painful conviction of the true consequences of their own principles, they would run eagerly into every expedient to new-model the public philosophical system, for their mutual preservation and self-defence. The very man, whom successful perfidy, aided by the national belief, had armed with the power of oppression, and enabled to break through the laws, divine and human, with impunity, would find himself obliged for his own security, and lest another should reward his treachery in his own coin, to labour for a reformation, and to recall the antiquated system. Are not fidelity, justice and truth, precious things indeed, when the very Atheist himself is compelled to fly to them, as his only refuge, in distress, nay his only security, at his highest elevation, and prosperity? Let it especially be here remarked, that at the very time the Infidel is contriving to spread his pernicious principles, with so much zeal and cunning, in the state, under the protection of which, he is permitted to draw, and vent his pestilential breath,

breath, he is secured, against the perilous consequences of them, by the salutary nature of the contrary tenets, which he is secretly endeavouring to depreciate, and eradicate. It is not in the wit of man to contrive any other means for the security of each individual, a family, a society, a kingdom, than the persuasion of the certainty of a future day of account. This being laid aside, not all the invention, or power of man will be able to change the natural tendency of things. (n) The dire effects of such wretched policy, in countenancing libertinism, and a looseness of principles, cannot lie dormant in a state. Every one must be sensible that nothing is secure from a man of no principles, though his power be but small; nothing in danger from a man of right principle, though his power be ever so great. Let this extreme difference of the two systems be ever kept in mind.

5. So then, it seems, says the Infidel, religion, and the notion of the immortality of the soul are mighty convenient things, to keep the members of a society honest, and

(n) Mandeville, (who, in his *Fable of the Bees*, takes his arguments, not from reason, but from precedent and example,) supposes it may be right to cherish libertinism to a certain degree, in a commonwealth, and then to punish it. Could the man be serious in imagining that vice may safely be trained up to a certain growth, and then cut and shaped at will, as Gardeners do their Ever-greens?

peaceable

peaceable among themselves. It is granted. And what then? Does this prove them any thing else but priestcraft, men's artful improvement of this observation to their own utility? It was this, to be sure, that gave shrewd tyrants, with their tools, the priesthood, a hint and handle to bring the vulgar herd under their subjection.—To all there is of argument, in this invective against religion, and principle, it may thus be replied.—This very connection of the happiness of society, with the respect, it's members pay to these, evidently shews that they have a deeper foundation in the nature of things, than could have been laid by men. Did Legislators, did Priests invent this connection? It is not a forgery of theirs, but a plain matter of fact. It cannot be said that they gave this salutary nature, this benign influence to the nature of these principles. That is an effect, that transcends the reach of human power. From whom does the nature of things derive it's origin? Who made this belief conducive to the happiness of man? And who are they, who by their philosophy seek to reverse the natures of things? If their natures be not the effect of chance, if their Author be not a liar, can there be a greater security that an after-state shall certainly succeed, than that the belief of it is inseparably connected with our happiness in this? Can such a proof be produced for any but true principles? Is there any thing in
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the atheistical system, that bears this stamp of authenticity? All there tends to the disorder, and confusion of the world. Freedom is it's arrogant boast: And is it slavery to be under the command of rational principles? Is it priestcraft to teach these principles, principles, that confessedly point out the way to be happy here, and for ever, if there be an eternity, or an eternal Author, and Governor of the universe? That some men, in teaching these truths, or enforcing this belief, may abuse the authority they obtain by it, is undeniable; as what is there incapable of being abused by the perverseness of man? Yet still, in the nature of things, no truth, no belief can be more conducive to the good of mankind.

6. It is a quite different thing, not to have inquired formally into the immortality of the soul, and to profess a belief of the mortality of it, pretending to derive the notion from the principles of reason, and philosophy. In the first case, common sense may keep men right in the main, with respect to the capital points of practice, relating to the support of society, and the duties of one individual to another: So exactly does the moral sense, implanted by the beneficent Creator in the human breast, and the genuine salutary effects of the belief of the immortality of the soul, correspond. Common sense will never differ from that which is the common interest. Let
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the Atheist advert to this coincidence, and reflect that his principles and philosophy are a contradiction to the common sense of mankind. Reason is of such a consistent nature, that the beginnings of it do not contradict it's farther progress, nor this destroy these. Though men have not pushed their inquiries so far as they might, or so far as formally to demonstrate the immortality of the soul; yet unless their practices were such as were consistent with the belief of it; and such as might naturally lead them to the consideration of it, as being inconsistent with the contrary notion, society could not subsist among them. But in the last case of a nation professing the belief of the mortality of the soul, the true consequences of each man's living conformably to that profession have been fairly stated. No nation ever established the belief of the mortality of the soul, nor ever will; let the world come to what height of impiety it can. (o) The very consistency of society depends entirely on making and observing such laws, as are only agreeable to the supposition of it's immortality. Though

(o) When Fabricius was at supper with Pyrrhus, hearing, for the first time, of the Epicurean philosophy, that the gods take no heed of human actions, he suddenly exclaimed, Πυρρὸν τὰ δογματὰ μέλοι — O Hercules, let these be the principles of Pyrrhus and the Samnites, while at war with us: meaning that a people entertaining such a notion could not long withstand the Romans, or subsist among themselves.

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men may not now observe so attentively, as they ought, the agreement between that principle, and the established practices in societies; yet the establishing the contrary principle, of it's being mortal, would soon awaken all the world to a feeling conviction of the inconsistency of their creed. Truth has many advantages, which we do not heed, till it's contrary discovers their use, and expediency.

OBJECTION 4.

BY professing a belief of the immortality of the soul, men have introduced much folly and superstition into their notions and practice.

1. If reason be the thing we are seeking, this can be no reason at all. Because men have erred upon one extreme, is it right that we should err as much, nay more, upon another, and that a worse extreme? Is there no medium between idolatry, and atheism, superstition, and a libertine contempt of all rational restraint? Men, for want of reflecting on the nature of the Supreme Being, and his wise dispensations in regard to his intelligent creatures, may fall into many absurd notions about the manner of worshipping, and pleasing him, about what may propitiate, and make him friendly to us. To certain ridiculous rites, and actions, men may

may be induced to believe he has annexed a certain energy and force, to rescue them from distress, or avert impending danger. Thus out of weakness, and ignorance they may be betrayed into many practices, which a more enlightened reason highly disapproves. They may yet be right in the main point, that we are dependant creatures, accountable to a superior Being, and beholden to him for all things. This weakness, and ignorance, nay, these pernicious errors, with all their worst consequences, are the conditions of our humanity in this life, and may be perfectly consistent with the wisdom, and goodness of the Author of it, if there be a future state ordained to rectify all this disorder. But from this very folly and extravagance of some men, shall the Infidel presume to erect the human species into the supreme order of beings in the universe, with all our blindness and defects about us? Is not this evidently a grosser absurdity? Does it not exhibit a greater degree of folly, than that, for which he so superciliously affects to despise the poor misguided bigot? To constitute such a creature, as man, an independant sovereign Being, is certainly a notable piece of arrogance.

2. It was fear, says the Atheist, that first brought the notion of a God into the world, insinuating that reason affords no evidence of the existence of a Supreme First-Cause, and disposer of all things. We have
seen

seen that reason evinces the being of a God, and that he is infinitely just. Not to fear him then, when offended, not to dread the effects of his avenging justice, may be insensibility; it cannot be reason. When we have acted the part becoming a rational and moral creature, we have nothing to fear from a Being infinitely wise and good. The glorious and enlivening hopes, we then are led to cherish, is reason inclined to smother? Truly deplorable is the state of that mind, whose principles point out no mode of riddance from just fear, but a renunciation of all reasonable hope. This objection from fear can, with more justice, be retorted on the unbeliever himself. It is not rational religion, with a conduct regulated by it, that can give us any ground to fear. It is, on the other hand, because atheism holds out an immunity from just fears, that bad men eagerly embrace it. Lucretius we have seen affecting to claim an extravagant merit, by freeing men from religion, and the fear of punishment. Punishment! of what? virtuous actions? No, that is repugnant. Of misdeeds? Alas! that is to let loose vice and profligacy abroad in the world. Is that his mighty merit? The worst, that a rational religionist has to fear, is the very best that the Infidel has to hope for, annihilation; a notable disparity, in truth! On what side now does the greatest fear appear to lye? The good

man indeed has nothing to fear, all things to hope, if there be an infinitely good Being. The fear of the Atheist, on the contrary is left there should be infinite wisdom, justice and goodness in nature. A truly desperate circumstance! His absurd irrational courage accordingly fails him in distress; while truth, and religious principles stand their ground, and exhibit their lustre but the more gloriously, in the hour of affliction. On that occasion, the fears of the Infidel are most painfully awakened. He cannot but suspect that the supreme justice, he so often braved, is now at hand; his hour of account is come. (o) A man who depends upon chance may be desperate; but it is contradictory to suppose him valiant from an internal principle. An intrepidity, arising from constitution of body, though a great advantage in many cases, is not courage, any more than stupidity, and ignorance of danger; nor does true valour consist in an acquired, or mechanical habit, where fear is gradually lessened, purely by the famili-

(o) The most trifling occurrences disturb him then. Plutarch relates that ordinary things, which happened before the battle, in which Cassius fell, shook him extremely, though his constitution and natural temper were far from weakness. But he was Epicurean in his philosophy—*ἀφοσιούμενοι (οἱ μάντις) τὴν δεισιδαιμονίαν* (arising from a swarm of bees seen within the rampart, and carnivorous birds hovering about the army,) *ἀτρέμα καὶ τὸν Κλάριον αὐτὸν ὑποφύσαν ἐκ τῶν Ἐπικύρου λόγων.*

Plut. in Brut.

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arity of danger : Nor does it consist in artfully turning away the consideration of peril from our attention, and keeping some other thing in view, which may readily enough be done by the man, whom ambition, lust, revenge, or any other ungovernable passion inflames. Genuine valour will regard the danger calmly, yet fully, considering it in all it's consequences, and still remain firm. Nothing can effect this but an enlightened and upright conscience, a determination of acting consistently an honourable and rational part, and a confidence that an infinitely just Being presides, and will secure us in the end, from evil and danger in every respect. What pretence then has the unbeliever to object fear to the man of rational and upright principles ? Truth is Truth alike in all circumstances, calamitous, and prosperous ; Reason becomes not the less conclusive, when we are just expiring ; nor is integrity shaken by an earthquake, or hurricane. To have nothing to fear, if there be an infinitely good and just Being, is to have every thing to hope. Yet fear, says the Atheist, first made gods. He might say as well that oppression, cruelty, perfidy first made gods in the world. These necessarily drive men to have recourse to a Sovereign Arbiter of human affairs, to redress the wrongs they suffer. Is that any reproach ? He who feels injustice, by a natural argument may infer it's correlate, a

just principle, to whom he will be prompted to appeal; and never in vain, if there be any foundation in reason and truth.

3. Let the Infidel give a direct unequivocal answer, if he can, to this question.—Would it be better for the affairs of the world, that there were an infinitely perfect Being, to inspect, and regulate them, to adjust all things so, as may best promote the wisest ends, that injustice, disorder, and confusion may not finally prevail, according to the scheme of his adversaries; or that all things should fall out by random chance, without government, conduct or design according to his own hypothesis? When his Grecian master had proclaimed aloud, that chance was the sole power concerned in the production of things, we have heard Lucretius exulting declare, that his mind cleared up, and all fear forsook it. How unworthy of this boasted patron of reason to rejoice, that there should not be an infinitely rational Being, to govern the universe! If the modern Atheist will stick to his master's tenet, will glory in rejecting a divine Providence, and a life to come after death, let him attend to the obvious purport of his choice. He declares in effect, that if it were in his determination, by improving his moral and rational nature, to exist for ever, still becoming more perfect, and becoming capable of higher degrees of happiness; or by a paltry gratification of his brutal appetites for a while, to
wallow

wallow, a few fleeting years, in that groveling state, then vanish into nothing, he would, upon these terms, prefer an utter extinction before a happy immortality. And with respect to this present life he declares, that he would rather chuse to be under no rule or government at all; but that every man's will should be his only law, without any supreme Arbiter to controul oppression, or punish injustice, or perfidy: He declares, when he sees men in the circumstances of undeserved wretchedness, abandoned by ungrateful friends, made odious by artful slander, starving for want of the necessaries of life, through the fraud, or violence of others; or when he hears of unguarded innocence ruined, or betrayed by force, or cunning, murder perpetrated in secrecy, groans of defenceless, unoffending persons inhumanly maimed and wounded, tears of compassion, or indignation, for injured virtue expiring in agonies far from human help; he declares it is better chance should govern all, than that there were an eye above to notice, a righteous Judge to register these things, and one day to make a glorious manifestation of himself, and of his justice, to all the rational beings in the universe. But if he will not chuse to say this, he must answer, that it would be better that there were an infinitely wise Ruler, to conduct all things to a justifiable conclusion. If he should say it would be better, let him tell us, how it could be

so, without being more agreeable to reason. He is thus driven to confess, the belief he opposes is infinitely agreeable to reason. But if it be more reasonable, and by an infinite excess, why does he not embrace it? He has nothing now to say, but that an infinitely perfect First-Cause, and Governor of all things includes a natural impossibility. But in the first Section of this book it is demonstrated, that the non-existence of such a Being implies a contradiction. Being thus driven to acknowledge an all-perfect First-Cause, the Infidel cannot defend himself from the necessity of owning a wise government in the affairs of mankind, and a final rectification of the disorders, which appear at present, or in other words, the reality of a future life after this.

OBJECTION 5.

THE evils natural and moral, visible in the world, render all arguments, taken from the supposition of a wise disposer of all things, inconclusive.

1. OF these perplexing phenomena, it has been already observed, that no perfectly satisfactory account is to be expected by man, in a state, the dependencies and connections of which, he is utterly incapable, through his present imperfections, to comprehend; that the wisdom and goodness of God are visibly displayed in all his works,
and

and the more enlarged our power of intelligence, the more conspicuous these attributes become to us; and it was from hence concluded, that any pretence of limiting these perfections of the Supreme Being, taken from the appearances of evil in the world, was making our ignorance and folly, the test of infinite knowledge and wisdom. Dissatisfied with this humble, and avowedly imperfect account, what has the self-sufficient Infidel to offer? He deigns not to untie the knot; he rashly, but weakly, strives to break it. Disgusted with difficulties seemingly inexplicable in the scheme of his adversaries, he flies to a system, which affords not one glimpse of light, but what manifests the grossness of it's own absurdity. It is not philosophical nicety, but something less justifiable, that must be assigned, as the cause of this defection from the chearful light of truth. It cannot be the guidance of impartial reason, as is pretended, that leads a man to desert a beautiful, and consistent account of the origination, and government of all things; because it appears to include certain ideas above his comprehension; and run with open arms, though stumbling with self-contradictions, at every step, to embrace annihilation, and despair. May we not compare him to an ill-conditioned guest, who quarrels with every thing abroad, though it be decent, wholesome, palatable,

and in plenty ; and yet has nothing at home but penury, nastiness, and misery ?

2. As to the appearances in the material world, at which he cavils ; and affirms they cannot be the effect of a wise Being ; let it be first observed in general, that every Objector here finds various faults according to his peculiar caprice, or several imperfections in knowledge. If the pretended defects in the mundane system had been corrected, according to the notion of Alphonso, another would be sure to carp at those very corrections : And not one of these new editions of the universe would have been so little liable to exception, as the old one. The Infidel finds nothing fixed or solid here, whereon to place the strength of his objection. Had it been left to one of these philosophers ; (no matter for the absurdity of the supposition,) to have new-moulded the world after his fashion, would all his marks of superior knowledge and contrivance hinder another philosopher, arising up after him, to infer from something, not exactly squaring with his conceit, that all this was the effect of chance, of blind necessity, of no philosopher at all ? In short, not even the effects of adorable wisdom are guarded from the attacks of conceit, and ignorance : And the greater our ignorance, the more presuming our conceit ; while on the contrary, the more accurate, and extensive our researches are into the works of nature, if

we proceed upon right principles, the more true art and skill they are conducted with, the more admirable and profound the knowledge and wisdom, we shall find exhibited in them. The modern way of investigating the methods of nature, and the discoveries of the new philosophy, consequent upon that, are a sufficient proof of this. How does this single evidence for a wise over-ruling Providence outweigh all the objections that ever were, or can be made against it! Lucretius, who was so confident, from the *rationes cæli*, that a world so full of blunders was not of divine original, (p) knew little of these *rationes*, in comparison with what is discovered at this day. Had this been known to him, it would have lowered much of his foolish arrogance. When he comes, according to his promise, to insist on these blunders, they are strangely frivolous, and built on the weakest prejudices. (q) The first

(p) Nam quamvis rerum ignorem primordia quæ sint,
Hoc tamen ex ipsis cæli rationibus ausim
Confirmare, aliisque ex rebus reddere multis,
Nequaquam nobis divinitus esse creatam
Naturam mundi, quæ tantâ est prædita culpa.

Lib. II. § 177.

(q) See these reputed blunders, Lib. V. § 200. & seq.
— And when he comes to explain the motions of the heavenly bodies, his *rationes*, precious accounts in truth, are like the wild conjectures of a bedlamite.—As when he supposes that the motion of the stars is occasioned by their going up and down the sky seeking aliment, feeding themselves with fiery bodies, (§ 524) that the true

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first, (that so small a part of the earth is tenanted by man,) has been noticed, and I hope, to the satisfaction of the candid Inquirer, in Sect. I. No. 20. How inconclusive are the rest, will shortly appear.

3. The earth it seems is barren. Answer; yet it brings forth many things spontaneously; and every thing we want, with proper culture. The objection runs upon the supposition, that if there were a Being of infinite wisdom, his wisdom would have judged best for us, in our present circumstances, that every thing we require, should spring up without our concern, or labour. But as this does not appear self-evident, or a supposition that needs no proof; what would the Infidel say, if he were put to prove it? Let him but recollect his own propensity to insolence and forgetfulness, in the height of prosperity. He must shew that infinite wisdom itself, could not disclose any design in view, by which it might appear that this should be most eligible for our nature, in our present condition. This demand would silence him effectually. What is our culture? Do we apply the power, or the knowledge, by which vegetation is effected? Will he say, it is a less instance of

true and apparent magnitude of the sun, moon, &c. are the same, (§ 565) that a moon is created anew every month, (§ 730) that the eclipse of the sun happens from a real loss of light in it. (§ 757) Is not this a curious Objector against infinite knowledge?

goodness,

goodness, and wisdom, and power, that these things should rise for us, when cultivated, than it is an objection against these attributes, that we should be required to cultivate them? Will he reason thus, "we sow the seed, and it grows up, wonderfully indeed; yet if it were not sown by us, it would not grow up at all; therefore when sown, it vegetates by no power, no knowledge, no wisdom?" All, he will say perhaps, is the effect of blind chance, fate, or necessity. But chance is a name for nothing, a word importing our ignorance of a true cause: Necessity imposed by no being, itself nothing, and belonging to nothing, is a term equally unmeaning in his mouth, a subterfuge to his disingenuity. We are beforehand with the Atheist here; having actually shewn a consistent and substantial cause of these effects. Let him prove that in times of greatest scarcity, the earth does not produce as much as would be sufficient for the sustenance of all men, if avarice, monopolies, and luxury did not combine to cause the famine; or if a fair and equal distribution were made. Has he calculated, and cast up the balance, between the superfluities, and luxury of one part of mankind, and the want of necessaries of the other? More perish through our hardness and oppression of one another, than through any deficiency of what is necessary for the maintenance of all men. But he must also prove; that al-
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lowing the earth does not produce enough for the support of all it's inhabitants ; we deserve no chastisement ; or not this kind of chastisement. He is not aware how many things he takes for granted here, that will not be allowed him ; yet without which, his objection has no force. Yet he proceeds, objecting that rains, heats, blights destroy the harvest. Though this, in effect, be answered already, he is desired to make it appear, that supposing there were an infinitely wise and just Being, this is not best to come to pass. Is it so self-evident as to need no proof, that we should be more thankful, more inclined to own ourselves dependent beings, if our hopes were never liable to be frustrated ? If we be not free from guilt, (which assuredly will not be pretended, though indeed, guilt be no very intelligible term upon his supposition, where there is neither law, nor judge to be offended,) shall we blame the judge, who upon our conviction, decrees a just punishment for our offence ? Let the Objector impartially examine the nature of prosperity, and adversity : Let him shew that it is the natural tendency of prosperous fortune to render us grateful, humble, dependant ; and of adversity to make us insolent, refractory, and forgetful of our infirmity, and frailty. Here indeed the Infidel does not own himself dependant, or beholden to any cause : And the argument he produces, in justification of his denial

denial of a Supreme First-Cause, of infinite wisdom and goodness, is this, and nothing more: That we have it not in our power to be just as undutiful, as regardless of a superior Being, as the never feeling want, or the being sensible of no power, that crossed our inclinations, would infallibly make us. The greatest moral good is often the production of natural evil: And the worst effects upon the nature of man, as often arise from the enjoyment of continual prosperity. The sages of antiquity (*r*) strongly recommended a constant suspicion of the smiles of fortune, and celebrated, in exalted strains, the salutary effects of adversity. Correction is the paternal kindness of the Deity. The child corrected with prudence, may kiss the rod, grow humble, and amend. The condition, that best becomes humanity, creatures in a state of discipline, is that which makes us reasonable. Correction is often requisite to effect this. To what a pass would the father of a young family see it grow up, were

(*r*) See the prayer of Camillus in Plutarch, when his friends congratulate him upon his taking Veii.—

Εἰς' ἃρα τὴν (ἰσὴν) καὶ ἡμῶν ἀντίστροφος ὀφείλεται τῆς παρῆς νύκτος εὐπροξίας, εὐχομαι ταύτην ὑπὲρ τοῦ πόλεως, καὶ τοῦ Πρωκίωνος εἰς ἑαυτὸν ἐλαγίστω κακῷ τελευτῆσαι: As if calamity, like an envious Dæmon, always attended in the train of success. His banishment ensued soon after. Without superstition, he might probably foresee the natural effects of insolent prosperity. The well-known story of Amasis and Polycrates in Herodotus, is remarkable, and may as rationally be accounted for.

every

every one accustomed to be superior to all controul. Would such children ever prove men good for any thing? Apply this argument to mankind in general.

4. To this head belongs what is objected concerning wild beasts, enemies to mankind, with many things in nature poisonous, or destructive of their bodily constitution. It is replied, that man, by his reason is superior to the beasts of prey. The strongest poisons are medicaments, duly used, and the best things unduly used, may become poisonous. But why must we suppose it right that nothing should be hurtful to the body? Why become we daily more old? Why is this material part mortal? Let us even say once for all, Why is not every thing just as we would have it? The next complaint would be; when we found the folly of our own wishes, Why are not things better than we know how to desire them? Why truly they are thus already, and all rational complaint prevented. There is demonstration that there is a Being of infinite wisdom, demonstration that his existence is necessary. It is certain that such a Being cannot be mistaken; and equally certain that we are very ignorant. Let the conclusion from this be drawn.

5. The like answer will hold good to a similar objection: Why is man born weaker, and more defenceless than many brutes? By the assistance and care of rational parents,
his

his weakness is more securely provided for, than if he were born stronger, and with natural weapons. It might as well be questioned, why man is not born at full growth, stronger than an elephant, swifter than a greyhound, with the wings of an eagle, with the fins of a fish, to move and subsist at will, on land, in air, or water; that he has not yet many other advantages, above what we have any notion of. How impertinent is this licentious cavilling! Had we other advantages, greater still would be possible. An effect can be but limitedly perfect. There is no stopping the mouth of an unreasonable man. Were his objections rational, reason might be brought to obviate them. Will he say it exceeds the power of Omnipotence to compensate the present disadvantages of this state of probation, in a future state of positive happiness? The plain contradiction there is in such an assertion, puts all complaint to silence.

6. But how, he still insists, could the wrath of heaven be so promiscuously dealt, under the direction of a wise Being? Why, for instance, does the thunder, instead of being levelled at the perjured, or sacrilegious head, fall upon some oak of the desert, or perhaps on some innocent traveller? This is commonly uttered with the greatest confidence and triumph. Cyniscus, in Lucian, defies Jupiter himself to

answer it. (s) The only perplexing circumstance is the calamity, that befalls the virtuous man here, while the wicked live in the undisturbed enjoyment of the good things of the earth; of which a proper account shall be given immediately. But let it first be noticed that the Infidel, upon this occasion, takes that for granted, of which he cannot have any certain knowledge; that the traveller is innocent; that the fit time to punish the sacrilegious person is already come; that sudden death is a misfortune to a good man; though to him it may be a happy release from the pains of the body, and to others an instructive lesson to be always prepared for an event, that must surely come to pass, but the precise time of which is not revealed to man.

7. The Infidel always sets out with begging the very point in controversy, that the soul is mortal, without any manner of proof, declaring bluntly—*Se scire animi naturam sanguinis esse.* (t) Having blindly determined this matter, he observes that the rule of justice does not constantly obtain here, nor are the deviations from it corrected accord-

(s) Jupiter confutatus. Nay he makes his Jupiter actually silenced by it. *Τὴ σιωπᾷς ὁ Ζεὺς*;—And Lucretius —

————— In deserta recedens,
Sæviat, exercens telum, quod sæpe nocentes
Præterit, exanimatque indignos, inque-merentes.

Lib. II. 1701.

(t) Lib. III. § 48:

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ing to his mind; and so he concludes that they are finally left uncorrected. To this succeeds his grand conclusion; that there is not an infinitely wise and just Being, who made the world, and governs it. This is a short, but fair account of his system: And if indeed the first position, that there is no hereafter, had been solid, the last conclusion might have been deduced consequentially from it. But without that, to what does it all amount? Only this; that because they have happened to be guilty of a mistake in establishing a false position, therefore there are many appearances in nature, not to be accounted for on their principles; consequently there is no just and wise Ruler of the universe. He takes for granted, what, in the nature of things, it is utterly impossible he should ever prove, that the soul of man is material; *tenuem constare minutis Corporibus*; the contrary to which has been clearly demonstrated in a former work: But in this, it has been shewn that even supposing the soul to be material, this does not prove it mortal. The scheme of infidelity is now overturned from it's foundation. Thus it stood or seemed to stand. The soul is material; therefore mortal; therefore justice does not ultimately obtain; therefore there is no just Ruler of the world; therefore there is no God. The two first positions falling, what is built on them must fall too. The Infidel makes a

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supposition contradictory to truth and justice, and from thence infers, that justice and truth have no reality. Does he chuse to reverse this method, and attack the existence of the Supreme Being first? The demonstration of the necessary existence of an eternal First-Cause is absolute, and without any respect to the nature of the human soul. But this being once established, the immortality of the soul is fairly and consequentially deducible from it.

8. The disastrous gloom, which the atheistical system spreads over those events, which are indeed utterly unaccountable, on their method of procedure, now begins to disappear. If there be a future state, the Infidel can draw no argument from them. They rather appear a wise and regular contrivance of things, as they will the more wonderfully manifest the wisdom, power, and goodness of God, who out of such perplexity, and disorder in human affairs, will disclose a surprizingly beautiful scene of order, glory, and beneficence. I will confidently affirm, that the system, or contrivance, which would have been thought satisfactory to these conceited objectors, would have been a most unwise one. The scheme, of which the wisest of mankind could have seen the end, must have been far from taking in a just length of design. How many inconsistent parts must it have consisted of, that it might appear consistent to us! They
act,

act, and reason most wisely, who humble themselves under a sense of human ignorance, when compared to infinite knowledge. We should adore the goodness of God, and firmly rely on his truth. This resignation shall one day be made appear in the sight of all the rational beings in the universe, to have been the greatest wisdom; while those presumptuous objectors shall be confounded, on discovering their folly, and arrogance, in prescribing measures to unsearchable wisdom. How firm is the security, how unspeakable the delight arising from the thought that a Being of infinite perfections conducts the affairs of the world; and that all things must proceed unerringly, to such an end, as the whole chorus of intelligent beings shall unite in justifying, with applause, and gratitude. We are thus freed from a task, to which our ignorance, and weakness are greatly unequal, and which the joint endeavours of all beings else, must have brought to a point of inextricable confusion. May I be allowed upon this occasion to quote from Dr. Niewentyt, what he mentions as a singular instance of philosophical sagacity, concerning a poor woman in Holland, who being rebuked for singing in a dreadful storm of thunder, answered, it was in security that God governed the world? While the simplicity of this relation, provokes a contemptuous smile, in the conceited pretender to free-thinking, the man

of an enlarged and solid understanding, will acknowledge the conclusion was drawn from the principles of a rational, and sublime philosophy. Is the Infidel aware, what is the real object, he is rashly aiming to attack? It is infinity of knowledge, which he presumes to sound, and declares deficient. Does the consciousness of his own narrow intellect never occur, to prevent his daring to apply a measure to unbounded wisdom? We should without hesitation pronounce the man incorrigibly absurd, who should pretend that by a multiplication of finite force, he could resist infinite power, could measure infinite space, or endless time. The absurdity is every where alike, where infinite perfection of any kind is concerned. Is infinite knowledge a contradiction? There is an infinite object of knowledge, and this object may be known. These assertions are certainly clear of all contradiction. The objections of infidelity come just to this: We do not understand infinitely, therefore there is not an infinite understanding, or there cannot be any thing above what we understand; a folly more unpardonable than that of a boy, who should think it impossible for a Locke, or a Newton to know more than he. How ridiculous are these pretensions in a creature, who not understanding how the smallest blade of grass springs up, might as well affect to under-
value

value the knowledge and power that makes it grow!

9. If thus all the supposed inconsistency alledged by the Infidel to be found in the doctrine of those, who plead the cause of God, and of humanity, is proved to be no inconsistency at all; what pretence has he to fly from this doctrine, to join with manifest and irreconcilable absurdities? But since we have seen a high degree of moral certainty arising from every quarter, to bear testimony in favour of it, on which side are the unaccountable appearances now? The atheistical arguments shrink into narrow bounds indeed, when these wretched cavils, all founded in avowed ignorance alone, are taken away. They have proceeded in a strange manner with the Deity. Blinded in clouds of dust of their own raising, they purposely first lose sight of him, and then discharge him for good and all. The mistake has been easily rectified. It will not be so easy for the infidel to take off the force of a single objection before produced against his hypothesis, as it has been to remove all his together. The man has undertaken a severe task, who aims at loosening the foundations of truth and reason, and to make himself a match for infinity of knowledge and power! I doubt if there ever was an Atheist, who considered soberly, or was at all aware of the vast difficulties, in what

he meant to prove, or in what he was engaged to disprove.

10. The Infidel may still attempt to reply to the answers here given to his objections: What is all this, but an unfair shifting of the difficulty? At this rate it signifies nothing to find fault, or make an objection to any thing; because always the purposes of infinite wisdom are brought in to stop my mouth. But he is requested to consider that this is perfectly agreeable to the nature of the question, and he hath himself to blame for challenging the methods of a Being, who, it is contended, must be infinite in wisdom, and all perfections. He supposes that even infinite knowledge, and power are unequal to the task of unravelling the difficulty he brings; or to make the unaccountable appearances consistent. Thus he brings himself knowingly into an open contest with the Deity; and makes it very just, and according to the nature of the controversy, to require him to prove a real inconsistency in the methods of divine Providence. In making the challenge, he boldly constitutes himself a judge, of what infinite Wisdom ought to do, assumes to himself the knowledge of every thing, that should be, or could possibly have been the purpose of an all-seeing God. If any one should assert that the Rotunda at Rome was a bungling piece of work, and built in violation of the right rules of Architecture; such

such an assertion would suppose that he knew these rules, and could make their violation, in that celebrated temple, apparent. If he could do no such thing, would not a skilful architect be justified in treating such ignorant pretensions with contempt? The case of the Infidel, erecting his judgment in opposition to the decrees of Supreme Reason and Rectitude, is yet more contradictory to common sense, according to which, no possible objection can be raised against the divine attributes, from these untoward events; except upon the supposition, that they are final, and that beyond them nothing shall follow. Thus he is driven at last to a *petitio principii*, to suppose the very thing he pretended to prove, that the soul is mortal. This must compel him to suspect, and if he be capable of impartial reflection, ingenuously to confess, that all he ever did, or can object against the Being of a God, his providence, or the immortality of the human soul, is frivolous, and grounded on his own mistaken conceits.

SECTION VIII.

The Prepossession that we shall always exist, or continue endlessly conscious Beings is inseparable from the Constitution of human Nature; and influences, more or less, the Sentiments and Actions of all Men, those not excepted, who affect to maintain the Negative, or combat this Prepossession.

PROPOSITION I.

THE belief of our endless existence is not the effect of a partial prejudice, but is universally the property of man.

1. HAVING diligently attended to all the other topics, which establish a rational belief of the immortality of the soul, let us close our inquiry, by examining how far the prepossession of mankind in favour of this tenet extends. Lucretius himself allows the desire of existence to be naturally inseparable from humanity. He owns that whoever is once born, by the law of his nature desires pleasure, or necessarily wishes,

debet velle, (u) to remain in life (that is *in being*, upon his hypothesis,) as long as pleasure shall appear desirable; and that assuredly it can never cease to appear. Now though perhaps few men inquire properly into the nature of that pleasure, which would make an endless existence happy: Yet all men, without exception, naturally desire happiness, and using their power of reflection, they must desire the endless enjoyment of it, and consequently to exist for ever. When the Atheist affects, upon philosophical arguments, to insult the rest of mankind, for their pusillanimous dread of annihilation, or unwillingness to part with their existence; he determines first, that men are mere brutes, having reason only, instead of instinct, to supply their animal wants. Having thus degraded the noblest part of our nature, he finds nothing left in it, worthy of the ardent wishes we express for the continuance of it. What pretension has he to philosophy, who has never reflected on the nature of rational pleasure, the appetite for knowledge, and the contemplation of truth, who feels no desire of living to see more and more of infinite perfection, and becoming himself thereby, still more and more perfect? Between the desire and the object here, there appears to be a real proportion and consistency. But taking the unbound-

ed nature of his desires, on the one part, and on the other, animal pleasures, in which alone the Epicurean acknowledges a reality, but which have a scanty measure, and hasten quickly to an end in satiety, he finds a manifest inconsistency and disproportion there. The perpetuity of his existence, upon his principles, becomes a truly inconsiderable object: And we need not wonder whence he derives his boast of greater equanimity than other men, and a juster estimate of the value of life, despising, as a vain conceit in us, those glorious hopes, which indicate the perfection of our nature.

2. Let any man consult his own heart, he will not fail to find an instance of this general desire of existing perpetually, or of being always something conscious, intelligent, and perceptive of pleasure. In the very dawns of reason, let a child be told what is death, having no idea of any way of existing beside the present, amazement seizes him; he is perplexed, uneasy, dismayed. Inform him that after death he shall go to heaven: Explain to him a little, what is our conception of the state of good men after death; his mind presently settles again into calmness, comfort, and satisfaction. Without reflecting how he came by his existence, he has a strong prevention, which is inseparable from the nature of man, that it is not again to be taken from him: And this, without any previous reasoning
or

or exercise of the mind upon the subject. For another instance, which never fails, let us consider, how we are affected, when our reason is advanced to maturity, upon hearing any one, who in ostentation of a superior strength of mind, or contempt for the prejudices of a nursery, affects to vindicate the notion, that after death we become nothing, are utterly razed out of nature, and existence. What concern, what agitation, what horror does this always raise in a mind, not altogether void of sensibility? We pronounce the man utterly stupid, void of principle, or under the influence of some strangely unnatural biases, who can admit the idea, without an extremely painful shock: And this, notwithstanding that our reason readily informs us, that if we be nothing, we cannot be miserable, which excludes all notion of any thing to be feared, as happening after death. The real apprehension is, that we shall sustain a deplorable loss, by being deprived of existence, (*) of all ideas, the most abhorrent to nature.

3. In opposition to these, one instance only can be alledged, where it may be con-

(*) Lucretius appears not to have been aware of this, when he boasts of the mighty piece of service, he has done mankind, in ridding them from the fear of death, by his argument for annihilation, a notion far more dreadful, and afflictive to the soul of man.

tended

tended, that the desire of existence is separable from a rational nature: When men apparently seek to put an end to their being, by a voluntary infliction of death, upon themselves. But no man of impartial, and cool reflection will agree with the Epicurean notion, that such persons act rationally or according to nature, in this matter. And if rightly considered, it even confirms the truth contended for, the more; since these unhappy men pursue, what they suppose their only consistent pleasure still, a negative one indeed, immunity from pain. Persuaded that this is not attainable in existence, they do all they can to throw themselves out of it, in order to be out of the reach of suffering. But the rest of mankind, upon whose reason, not quite distracted by despair, there is no such unnatural bias, universally reject their false conclusion, that misery and existence are inseparable; and all invariably desire endless being. Many millions of persons have found themselves in such desperate circumstances, that this life presented nothing to them but misery; who have yet been restrained, by this salutary prepossession, from throwing it away at all hazards. But that measure would, in such cases, be certainly natural, and right, (y) upon the supposition of the Atheist, if

(y) Τὸ μὲν ζῆν ἐν κόσμῳ καὶ Θεῶν, ἢ παύσας καὶ
 Marc. Antonin. Lib. II.

by throwing themselves out of life, they should put an end to their conscious existence. An invincible prevention against that supposition, an inward persuasion that death is but the change of our mode of existence, and not an utter extinction, is the general bar against this deed of desperation. The rational believer indeed is possessed, under every distressful emergency, of the most unfailing motive for resignation, and a patient endurance of the evils of life, a steady persuasion that the infinite perfections of the Deity stand engaged for the endless duration of his soul, that its connections run deep in nature, being rooted in the everlasting foundation of it. (z) A wilful throwing

(z) To the unbeliever, alas ! this affords no conviction at all. Would he be satisfied, if in confirmation of his immortality, he should see this Island of Great Britain torn from its foundation, suspended high in air for a moment, than whelmed in the depths of the ocean ? Weak man ! he considers not the true force of evidence. The reasons that conclude the soul immortal are infinitely stronger than this proof would be. There is no connection between a temporary suspension of the laws of gravitation, and the human soul's being percipient after death. But if reason shews that the nature of that Being, who placed this Island on the base, that now supports it, is engaged for the perpetuity of the life of man, after death, what firmer security can he demand ? —To converse with one come from the dead ? —Would this content him ? Even this is appealing from reason to sense, to experiment from demonstration, which is a higher degree of certainty. To conclude that my soul will survive death, because that another of man does, is
arguing

throwing away of life he considers as a most heinous trespass against the prime decree of the Supreme Being, as rashly disclaiming his Supremacy, and affronting his Providence. He acknowledges it to be the original law of his nature to defend and preserve life, as long as he can do it consistently with truth, and justice. If indeed he cannot keep it, without a flagrant violation of the honour of God, or the welfare of society, he may boldly, and chearfully submit to the necessity of risking, or laying it down, in confident security of receiving a glorious, and eternal reward, from an infinitely gracious, and equitable Judge.

4. But when it is allowed us, that suicide, which is the effect of a frantic paroxysm, can be no rational exception to the generality of the prepossession in question, what shall we say to those, who directly combat, or deny that it is founded in reason. They at least would fain be thought exempt from such a prepossession. But are they so in

arguing from an unknown parity of case, where still the fundamental reason of certainty for the immortality of that soul, and mine, is left out. If there were no other reason to be given, the conclusion that my soul is immortal, because the soul of another man is so, would be very precarious; there being no necessary connection, leading from the one to the other. Even then, the most satisfactory proof and solid foundation of certainty, which resists all contradiction, would be from the consideration of the relation of the rational nature, to that of it's infinitely perfect First-Cause.

fact?

fact? The great Apostle of that sect himself shall inform us. We are indeed obliged to Lucretius, for the information: For except he had taught it us, it is possible we might never have suspected that the followers of Epicurus are not a whit more free from this general prevention, than other men. Those who deny the fact then, make him their adversary: Though, in truth, if he had not pointed it out, it could not well escape a man of some observation and reflection. But let us hear him express his indignation, that even those who the most openly professed themselves Epicureans in principle should disgrace their philosophical pretensions so far, as to grieve, or betray any pitiful concern for any thing that may happen after death. Such grief and concern, he says, in our brother free-thinker, convicts him of arrant hypocrisy. His profession to believe that all sense and consciousness is extinct in death, is all a cheat.

"Scire licet non sincerum sonere," &c. (a)

It is plain his loud pretension is not sincere. A silent anguish is yet lurking at his heart,

(a) Scire licet non sincerum sonere, atque subesse
Cæcum aliquem cordi stimulum, quamvis neget ipse
Credere se quenquam sibi sensum in morte futurum.
Non, ut opinor, enim dat, quod promittit: & inde
Nec radicitusè vità se tollit, et eicit:
Sed facit esse sui quid dam super in sciussese.

Lib. III. v 890.

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and breaks through his flimzy disguise. What a fine proof does he give us here, of his boasted persuasion? Far from really conceiving that death will snatch him totally, eject him radically out of life, his mind still runs upon something, he knows not what, that is fated to survive the body. The argument, against this general apostacy of the professed disciples of Epicurus, from the faith of their master, amounts to this: It is necessary that he, who grieves for any thing that is to happen after death, should suppose that after death he shall exist, be something conscious, something susceptible of pain and grief. Present anxiety for any posthumous calamity could not be consistent, without supposing that he shall have sense and consciousness, at the time, when it is apprehended the calamity will come to pass; a supposition directly contradictory to his pretended conviction. So much for the reproach, this doughty champion for annihilation casts upon his followers. In the mean time let us observe, that whatever holds good, with respect to fear, is equally conclusive, with respect to joy, or hope, or any other way that our minds may apprehend that we have some real interest in any event, that is not to take place, till our bodies are laid in the dust. This supposition manifestly accompanies our present affections of every kind regarding posthumous events.

5. There

5. There is a remarkable piece of disingenuity in the argument of Lucretius. He supposes the chief cause of sorrow to the Epicurean, upon this occasion, to be for what may happen to the body, after death; lest rottenness should invade, wild beasts or birds devour, or fire consume it. (*b*) He triumphs now in the cheap victory he obtains by freeing his weak brother, from these imaginary terrors. But let us consider more attentively this concern for things to happen after death, either as it discovers itself in other men, or as we find it, upon examination, within our own breasts, we shall find our ideas to be rather those of pleasures lost, than of pains endured; and least of all to be conversant about the state of our bodies, at the time. For, as we have already seen, it is chiefly the sense, and desire of pleasure, that makes us set our thoughts upon interminable existence, and deters us from supposing that any assignable period shall entirely close our being. Whatever are our chief desires in life, these will be they, about which our concern will be most engaged, when we think of leaving them at death. Hence the degeneracy of our concern proceeds from the degeneracy of our

(*b*) Proinde ubi se videas hominem miserari ipsum
Post mortem fore, ut aut putrescat corpore posteo;
Aut flammis inter fiat, malisve ferarum—— § 883.
Corpus uti volucres lacerent in morte—sed illud
Se fingit, sensuque suo contaminat adstans. Ibid.

E c

desires;

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desires ; which by no means shews our concern, considered in itself, and abstracted from views, ill adapted to a permanent state, to be absurd, or unnatural. For if our desires in life are such as best become the rational nature, our concern will manifest itself about these justifiable desires. What soul, once penetrated with a sense of the excellence of wisdom, and virtue, would not wish to be always improving in knowledge, and moral perfection? The more rational we are, the more ardent, and insatiable will our desire be for their infinite, and transcendently glorious object.

6. But Lucretius, presently starts from his argument against the absurdity of any concern for the body after death ; and makes it universally conclusive against all anxiety about any event whatever without the body. " Consider, he says, the lapse of all preceding ages, before we were born, concerns us nothing at all : And nature holds up this to us as a mirror, wherein we may discover that the similar lapse of time after our death is just as unimportant to us." (c) Where the stress

(c) *Respice item quam nil ad nos anteaeta vetustas
Temporis æterni fuerit, quàm nascimur antè.
Hoc igitur speculum nobis natura futuri
Temporis exponit, post mortem denique nostrum.* † 984.

He is more explicit in another place.---At the time of the Carthaginian war, when our fore-fathers were in the utmost consternation, and it was doubted whether Rome or Carthage should govern the world, we had no concern

stress of his argument is laid upon a supposition contradictory to evidence and matter of fact, that the persons, to whom he applies it, really believe they shall be nothing then. Annihilation being once admitted, there is no denying that all relation between us, and every thing else, is utterly abolished. We might then justly complain that we are cruelly deluded by nature in this prepossession; and that reflection is a very improper faculty, when it engages us poor mortals to disquiet our minds about any thing, in which it is a manifest contradiction to believe ourselves at all interested. So difficult it appears, even for the Atheist himself, to accommodate the situation of his mind to the hypothesis, he affects to maintain.

cern in all that tumult, and confusion; so whatever happens after we are once scattered into atoms, regards us as little, though the earth, ocean, and sky were then involved in one general wreck of nature.---As if he had said: All the concern we betray for posthumous calamities, is as unnatural, as lamenting those which happened some ages ago, without some lurking misapprehension to account for it. His words are these:

Et velut anteacto nil tempore sensimus ægri,
Ad conflagrandum venientibus undique Pœnis;
Omnia cum belli trepido concussa tumultu
Horrida contremuere, sub altis ætheris auris;
In dubioque fuit, sub utrorum regna cadendum
Omnibus humanis esset, terræque, marique:
Sic ubi non erimus, cum corporis atque animæ
Discidium fuerit, quibus è sumus uniter apti;
Scilicet haud nobis quicquam, qui non erimus tum,
Accidere omnino poterit, sensumque movere:
Non si terramari miscebitur, & mare cælo. † 844.

7. There is another remarkable instance of the universal prevention, that we shall survive the grave, in which these boastful professors of infidelity are especially concerned; the general desire, men have for present and future praise, for transmitting down to posterity their names, actions, sentiments, designs, nay the very shape and lineaments of a frame, that is then to be mouldering in the dust. What advantage do they preconceive from the posthumous reputation of a non-entity? What real relation to them, if then they are nothing, will there be in the praise and admiration of super-existing beings? Admiration of what? of whom? The actual belief that, in death, they shall be deprived of Being itself, would incessantly suggest to them the absurdity of affecting any of these trappings and ornaments of Being; and reason would farther assure them, that when Being itself will fall, all the appendages of Being will fall with it. Yet this desire of fame, lasting and posthumous fame as well as present reputation, very observably reigns, more or less, in every breast. What toils do not men endure, what dangers do they not freely tempt, that posterity may speak well of them when they are dead and gone? They voluntarily purchase this, with death itself; that is, upon the supposition of ceasing then to be, they more than *bazard being*, they throw it wilfully away, *to preserve a name*. The Patrons of the mortality

talities of the soul are invited to account for this last phenomenon. In the mean time it is reasonable to believe that these men, let them foolishly deny it, if they please, propose to themselves some posthumous gratification or other. It cannot be said, that all they affect is the present pleasure of foreseeing this. The present pleasure is altogether consequent upon the foresight. Will they say that, for the sake of the present prospect, they are content to put upon themselves a known fallacy; when that very knowledge of the imposition destroys the prospect? The object, which affects them, as foreseen, must certainly be considered by them as a reality. Besides, the obloquy, which they dreaded in life, is likewise an object of dread, and considered by them as likely to affect them after death. Let the Epicurean tell us, whether he could be really indifferent in this case. Should he know that some undiscovered act of his, that would blast his reputation, would certainly be divulged, after his death; how would this apprehension affect his mind, at present? He will find it is not in his power *to throw himself out of existence* then, in his conception, to use his poet's phrase; but his imagination will endure a pain, not dissimilar from that of his fellow-atheist, who fancies he is to feel real anguish, while the wild beast is tearing his dead body.

8. It will be answered here, that the apprehensions and affections of these men are absurd and foolish, applause and fame are empty bubbles: But that is not the question at present. It is this—What is the principle, from which they are thus affected? Is it not a prevention, that something of them, possessed of sense, and consciousness, will survive the grave. Is this apprehension consistent with the idea of their total extinction then? It is about the springs of our sentiments and actions that we are now enquiring; it is about the nature of humanity, and the necessary and universal prepossession of our future existence: And these are pregnant instances, which are here produced, where the natural constitution of a rational being cries out against annihilation. But neither is this concern for posthumous applause, an absurd and foolish passion. It's universality proves it consonant to the will of our Creator. Virtuous actions are those, which obtain the praise and esteem of the world; as vicious ones incur the general reproach and disesteem. When Mr. Locke, speaking of moral relations, says, that the measure of virtue and vice is to be taken from the general reputation or discredit they are in through the several nations of the world; (*d*) he appears to have expressed himself a little uncautiously; since a more

(*d*) *Ess. on Hum. Understanding*, B. II. C. 28. § 10.
infal-

infallible criterion of right and wrong, (with the eternal and unalterable nature of which he was well apprized,) might have occurred to his reflection. It is however certain that public esteem and applause are generally the result of virtuous actions; and a more deplorably unnatural symptom in a character can scarce be mentioned, than an utter insensibility to these motives. We have, it is true, a persuasive to virtue, and a dissuasive from vice, which ought to be infinitely more powerful than the praise and reproach of men: Yet the general operation of these motives upon our hearts, is a manifestly wise constitution of the Author of our nature. Under rational conduct, they serve the best and most useful purposes. The misconduct of them has been often mischievous: It is granted. So has every good principle, reason itself, been sometimes made subservient to destroy it's own interests, and the pursuit of the most irrational purposes. There may be men of such heroic virtue that the applause of other men may have no share in the production of their laudable actions; but no man ever arrived at this glorious height, without previously taking many a leading step: Nor do these men undervalue all reputation; though they may not affect the praise of the vulgar; being desirous, or perhaps secure of a more authentic approbation of their actions. That, which brings this appetite of our nature

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into disrepute is that often our desire of praise is so strong, and our merit, that should justify it, so small, that it only serves to expose our want of discretion. To desire the approbation of rational beings must everlastingly be justifiable, and right, be an unchanging law of the all-wise Father of men and angels: Not to deserve this, or to claim it, when unmerited, are the points wherein we are to blame.

9. To return to the argument of insincerity in the profession of the Infidel, and it's unsuitableness to his insatiable desire of praise. When we hear a man give out, that in a few years he knows he shall be nothing, that he is pleased with the thought of his approaching annihilation; declaring, at the same time, that he writes to acquire an immortal name; to which of these two inconsistent assertions shall we give credit? To the latter surely. What other motive could have set him to work? Any pretence of his aiming at the pleasure or profit of mankind would be ridiculous. His notion is evidently not less hurtful than it is displeasing. Lucretius is, of all writers, the most extravagant, in his professed desire of praise. He every where confesses, it was his grand inducement to write: (e) And the extreme vanity of his self-commendations must make

(e) See Book I. § 921.--B. II. § 729.--B. IV. § 3.--
§ 20.--§ 181.--B. VI. § 81.--&c, &c,

us readily believe him. But can we believe that he, who was so impotently fond of the notion that his name would super-exist in some distant future age, would be really dissatisfied with the thought, that he might then himself be something? If it be said, the foresight of his future fame, when he himself should be annihilated, was all he sought; his own arguments, against his weak brethren, rise up, and severely militate against himself. Had he foreseen that men would speak ill of him through future generations, he would have sought to arm himself against this concern, with the topics drawn from his philosophy.—*Scilicet haud nobis quicquam, qui non erimus tum, &c.* But this is applicable to the pleasure of praise as well as the pain of infamy. One is tempted to think the man is but in jest, upon seeing his real sentiments thus grossly contradict his pretences; when vanity appears to prompt his zeal for the propagation of a doctrine, which is so universal a leveler; where Creon, the prince, and Polus, the actor, Irus, the beggar, and Agamemnon, the sovereign among kings, are equally nothing; with a view merely of his occupying an eminent post, among these non-entities. For this, he endeavours to establish principles, which cancel all moral rule of action; deny an infinitely perfect First-Cause; disclaim the superiority of man

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over brutes ; and contend that reason is nothing but a jumble of senseless atoms.

10. It will be easy for those, who are willing to misunderstand this argument, to reply here : That if we had such an universal prepossession, that at death we cease not to be intelligent, and conscious of things without us, there would be no farther need of any inquiry into the immortality of the soul ; all men would readily allow it, finding the proof and ratification within themselves, which yet we see they do not : Therefore this prevention is not general, or is useless and idle, since it will stand no stress, with those, who are inclined to combat it. To this, the instances above produced, the actions of all rational beings, of the unbelievers themselves, with their own confessions, which evidence this possession, might be a sufficient answer. But let it be noticed, that it is not said, that all men, whose minds are pre-occupied by this notion, are able to deduce it, in a conclusive manner, from premisses properly laid down. It is allowed that, with most men, it is not the work of reason ; but the effect of a natural instinct, implanted by divine Providence in the breasts of all men ; whereby we tacitly assume what we earnestly desire, and what is ordained to have the most beneficial influence upon our actions ; without our seeking for a direct proof of it. It is therefore justly called a prepossession ; being an effectual

fectual impulse upon our minds, appointed for the producing a course of action, necessary to the good of the species, which could not take place, were our minds possessed with the contrary notion. It cannot then be said to be idle, since it actually inspires our resolution, and invigorates our endeavours, to regulate our conduct, upon the plan of divine wisdom. Yet it ought not, invincible and universal as it appears to be, to supersede all farther inquiry into the nature of the soul. The rational principle will be completely satisfied only with clear truth, not with preventions, even of the best kind. The prepossession is reasonable, is well-grounded, is readily accounted for: Yet, though it prevents our own reflections, it is right it should be tried by subsequent reasoning: For by that means it's truth, it's firm foundation in the reality of things, will the more triumphantly appear. As it universally precedes our own reasoning; it signifies to us, that we owe it's original to Supreme Wisdom itself; as well as that of our other natural instincts and appetites: But this is, properly speaking, that part of our human nature, which most eminently distinguishes us from brute beasts. For even where it is not a conclusion properly deduced from reason, it is yet a consequence of our being rational, and endued with the power of reflection. It agrees to the child, the grown man, the philosopher, the peasant; to all
rational

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rational creatures, and to them only. To call it a prejudice, in the bad sense of the word, is impertinent; for though it be previous to our own reasoning upon the subject, yet we never actually revolt from it again; which is not agreeable to the idea of a prejudice, in the worst acceptation: for these we lay down, as reason improves. But reason, be it ever so highly improved, will never shew this pre-occupation to be ill-founded, and disprove it, without at once disproving itself, and discovering that it were then a most improper faculty to creatures, in whom such prevention were not grounded in the nature of things.

PROPOSITION II.

THE visible effects of this prepossession extend themselves over the whole prospect of human affairs.

I. **THOUGH** it be a general and just complaint, that the important interests of men in a future existence are strangely neglected; yet upon a closer, and more accurate consideration of the subject, it will appear that the pre-occupation in question has a vastly greater effect upon the conduct and sentiments of mankind, than is commonly imagined. The actions of men, and the whole tenor of their thoughts, would be incredibly different

different from what they are, were the prevention, the constant secret suggestion, that at death, they shall not altogether cease to be, entirely suppressed. To carry their concern at all beyond the supposed time of their extinction, would then be thought manifestly absurd. The views of men would then as naturally and universally withdraw themselves within the limits of this short span, as they now extend themselves beyond it. And how the world could then subsist, or any kind of society be maintained in it, does not well appear. This would do the work of established atheism, and drive men precipitantly into actions, against the good of the species, and the consistency of social life. For each individual, incessantly prompted with the thought, that all relations between him, and the rest of mankind, were upon the point of being soon terminated for ever, would separate his views accordingly from the common interest. As the establishment of this disastrous principle would operate speedily to the total destruction of the human race; so we may be sure that every state and kingdom, in which it is found to be actually propagated and increasing, is running, with proportionable swiftness, to decay and ruin.

2. It is possible that some persons of great sensibility, and strong natural affections, may say that they would have the same present concern for all the superexisting part of the species,

species, which they now have, though they were even certain that death would be the utter extinction of their being. They deceive themselves very grossly indeed. They consult their thoughts, as they stand affected just now, and apply the affections rising from the present prevention to the contrary one. It is talking like unexperienced children, to be positive about our sentiments, in certain circumstances, while we are in quite opposite ones. There is no consulting our present nature, how we should be affected towards other beings, if we were divested of it, and had a contrary nature. We shall never find out this by contemplating our own hearts, without abstract reasoning upon the point. A man of a compassionate soul could never discover the possibility of a barbarous cruel nature, by considering his own breast, or the bent of his present temper; yet a very little observation would inform him, that inhumanity is a quality too often superinduced to the character of depraved man. So a person of a generous and grateful disposition will form a mistaken judgment of the affections of one, whom selfishness, and ingratitude secretly govern; and we see accordingly that such a man is often so incredulous of any thing disparaging to humanity, as to be greatly imposed upon. To find out the opposite affections arising from opposite views, we must, by a strong exertion of fancy and reason, place ourselves in

in that different situation of mind, which a variation in circumstances might be expected to inspire. Let us imagine, for instance, that we had just received the news, that upon account of some signal national blessing a public rejoicing, and solemnity was to be held on such a day, which might afford us a prospect of great entertainment: Supposing the intelligence conveyed, at the same time, to a malefactor, irretrievably condemned to die, the day before the festival; it were improper to say, that we should be variously *interested* in these tidings. The wretch, who knew he should not be living then, to partake of the festivity, could naturally have no concern, or *interest* in it, nor be affected by the news at all. It is inconsistent with reason to believe that those men, who anxiously concern themselves for the welfare of their surviving friends, at the approach of death, as indeed almost all men do, should really imagine the utter end of their existence near. What shall we say of the earnest solicitude of Otho, for the peace and safety of his partisans, (as related by Suetonius,) just before he put an end to his own life; that he might terminate the bloody contest; or of the extraordinary care for the preservation of his friends, which occupied the last thoughts of Cato, at Utica, who, as Plutarch tells us, just before his final act of desperation settled his mind, by reading Plato's dialogue on the immortality

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of the soul? Innumerable are the instances of great influence on the actions and sentiments of men, arising from a previous sense of the voice of nature, apprehended as feelingly addressing them, even after their own life here is closed. The Grecian women deterred from suicide, by the shame of their dead bodies being exposed stark naked; Lucretia's contrivance in killing herself, after such a manner as to clear her reputation; the very particular injunctions of Cyrus, relating to his body, at his last hour, (*f*) are cases in point. Who feels not in his breast some particularly interesting object, sacred to his affections, even after death; and of which he stands in awe, beyond the tomb? The objection, in short, is contradictory to common sense. It supposes that natural humanity would make us act as we do, though we had a certain persuasion of our utter extinction at death. That certain persuasion, and natural humanity, are inconsistent and contradictory to each other.

3. The conception that we are soon to lose our own existence, and leave the rest of

(*f*) After he had desired that if any were inclined to take him by the hand, or look upon him, they should do it, while he was yet alive, he adds, ἔταν δ' ἔγω ἔγκλειψομαι. ἀιτῶμαι ὑμᾶς, ὦ παῖδες, μὴδεῖς ἔτ' ἀνδρώπων τ' ἡμῶν σῶμα ἰδέτω, μὴδ' αὐτοὶ ὑμεῖς. What is meant by ἔγκλειψομαι appears a little after. This was to be done, while he was yet alive. Xen. Cyrop.

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our species behind us, would naturally fill us with regret for ourselves, but no concern for them. It would make us inexorable, and selfish to the last degree, regardless of every thing without ourselves; except so far only as they conduced to our own purposes, in our present little point of existence; and at our departure hence, *omnia vel medium fiant mare*, would be our farewell. Accordingly utter selfishness is the principal pillar of the Epicurean hypothesis. A sentiment not dissimilar from this, 'when I am dead, let all the world perish with me,' has been recorded, as frequent in the mouth of many a tyrant, like that in Claudian:

*Everso juvat orbe mori; solatia letho
Exitium commune dabit.* (g) —

These shocking sentiments of execrable monsters, leaving life against their will, and foreseeing, that in the renewal, or continuance of their conscious being, no prospect awaited them, but of unknown horrors, and accumulated vengeance, are not the sentiments of human nature. The Infidel certainly does not advert to the pernicious consequences of the

(g) "In the wreck of nature, the universal perdition would be some comfort in death." — Nero refined upon the first part of the sentence; and upon hearing something like it, cried out, *Immo, ius est*. Macbeth in Shakespear utters the same sentiment, when his affairs are desperate:

————— I'm weary of the sun;

And wish the state o' th' world were now undone.

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unconcern, he seeks to inspire, for all we leave behind us. Very deplorable, in truth, would be the state of that nation, whose Sovereign, being taught to regard his subjects, as mere machines, to be wound up for his entertainment, and to be destroyed at his pleasure, without any dread of an after-reckoning for his crimes, or wanton abuse of power, were persuaded that, together with his tyranny, his life, his existence would soon be at an end. But were the nation itself universally to hold the like persuasion, it's very being, as a nation, would swiftly hurry on to it's utter extinction.

4. From the contemplation of characters, derogatory from human nature, and supposed to be fraught with principles directly contradictory to it; let us turn back to the happy effects of the opposite principle, indelibly impressed, by the finger of God, upon the heart of man. This tacit prevention, that we shall be possessed of sense, and consciousness after death, engages us insensibly into a concern for the welfare of our survivors, and attaches our affections to the principles of justice, and every virtue beneficial to our species. It disposes us to become members of rational society. We see to what laudable foundations, and pious institutions, this concern for the good of mankind, after our own death, has given rise. What generous provision has been made, what wise regulations devised for the support

port of persons the most destitute, and the education of children, otherwise abandoned to wretchedness and desolation? Succeeding generations bless, and reap the fruits of the interest we take in posthumous events. We behold the designs of all men, who act rationally, and consistently with the common feelings of humanity, stretching out far beyond the term of their own lives. In the expenditure, and disposal of his present possessions, in the regard he thinks due to the remote effects and influence of his actions and sentiments, the very Atheist, would hardly think himself in his right and sober wits, if he paid no attention at all to the interests of a distant futurity. He that ordained the constitution of humanity has provided, for the preservation of the species, an invincible impulse in the minds of all men, some few unnatural characters excepted, which makes them propose to themselves a sort of secondary existence in their posterity. How would it shock parental tenderness, to be taught to think, we are concerned for beings as transitory as the empty bubbles in the stream! Our most common and ordinary ways of thinking and acting are full of references to things lying, without our noticing it ourselves, beyond the period of our life. This unobserved principle does the work of reason in the greatest part of mankind; who either never reason about their own nature accurately,

or are thus kept right, before they do so. Thus it gains an easy access to the rule of action mentioned above, and makes it congruous to our nature. Though, as Mr. Locke has shewn, we have no innate ideas; it has all the effect of one. Nor is there any thing in the soul of man so like a notion born with us, as this. It begins before our reason, rises necessarily to the reflecting mind, and never again forsakes it. There is no need that such a principle should be innate in the soul; nor indeed is it necessary that any principle should be born with us. To secure it's ascendancy over the human mind, it is enough that the common sense of all men, their common interest, the consistency of society, and the preservation of the very species, conspire to enforce their admittance of it. Humanity, in short, most minutely considered, or contemplated in the most extended views, the whole, and every part of our nature, universally opposes the supposition of the Infidel; and evidences a general prevention in behalf of the contrary persuasion.

SECT.

SECTION IX, and last.

*Some Remarks on the History of the general
Prevention of Mankind, in behalf of their
future Existence after Death.*

I. **T**HE idea of his future existence after death appears to have naturally and necessarily found an early entrance into the mind of man; even ever since his nature was what it is now; that is, ever since any considerate person thought upon death, and upon what he would wish to be, or happen after it. The desire of being always conscious, and intelligent of things without ourselves, being inseparable from our rational nature, it must have been always inevitable to a mind endued with a power of reflection, upon the first sight of the seizure, by death, of a person beloved, to ask itself, whither the living soul is fled, upon it's removal from the present scene. The fondness of parents for their children, the relations, natural affections, and tenderness, which connect the individuals of the species to each other, by indissoluble cordial ties, must always have been pretty

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much the same as at this day. The generations of men had else been few; and the whole race very soon at an end. Now it is not supposable that the sorrow endured by the first men, upon the loss of their departed friends could fail to put them upon the inquiry, what was become of their living, sentient, and intelligent part. Their frequent re-appearance to the survivors in their sleep, must alone have naturally suggested the notion, that they were still existent in some invisible state. Accordingly by all the vestiges, we can trace of the remotest antiquity, in the history of mankind, it is plain they thought the spirits of their friends, and benefactors, at their demise, were so far from being deprived of sense, and consciousness themselves, that they extended their concern to the affairs of their survivors: And blinded, by degrees, with superstitious reverence, they proceeded to adore them as tutelar Deities, presiding over particular families, tribes, and districts: For a sense of religion being by nature one of the strongest affections in the human breast; man is unspeakably more prone to the extreme of superstition, than to it's opposite of Atheism. This was probably the beginning of Polytheism, and all false religion; whereby men divided, and sub-divided the universal providence, according to particular kindreds, and countries. Hence the pride of every nation prompted it to set up it's own
peculiar

peculiar God; and then to fancy it impossible that one and the same being could superintend every thing, in all times and places. Be that as it will, the natural propensities in the human mind, and the affections universally inherent in it, indicate sufficiently that the notion of the immortality of the soul must have been started, almost from the very birth of reason itself.

2. That the idea of a future existence of the soul after death must have been almost coeval with the first dawnings of human reason is, by the half-learned, and half-reasoning Infidel, said to be disproved by the following passage, which has been quoted, usque ad nauseam, from Herodotus: "*The Egyptians were the first, who professed their belief of this notion, that the soul of man is immortal.*" He breaks off the quotation here abruptly, in the middle of the sentence, purposely overlooking it's connection with the subsequent part: "*and that, upon the dissolution of the body, it transmigrates into some other living creature, always born anew; and that, when it shall have completed it's circuit of animals, terrestrial, aquatic, and volatile, it shall reanimate once more the body of a man; and that this whole cycle of transmigrations shall be completed within three thousand years. This notion of the Egyptians has been adopted by the Greek writers, some sooner, some later, who have given it out as their own. The names of these*

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(plagiaries) *I know; but do not here set down.* (b) Now all that can be justly assumed from hence is this: that Herodotus says the Egyptians first taught the notion of a metempsychosis, or of an immortality of that sort. But it is to be noticed here that Herodotus openly professes in the beginning of the same chapter, "to write the traditions of the Egyptians concerning what had passed in former ages, rather than those transactions themselves;" which were probably taken from the legends of their priests. And such a collection was not without its use: For the traditions of a people must be admitted to constitute a part of their history, in the want of authentic records; only as they often disguise the reality of things, one should be cautious not to lay much stress upon them, without due reflection. The

(b) Πρῶτοι δὲ καὶ τὸνδε τὸν λόγον Ἀιγυπτίοις ἔισιν ἑπορίαι, ὡς ἀνθρώπου ψυχὴ ἀθάνατος ἐστὶ τῷ σώματι δὲ καταφθίνοντι, ἢ εἰς ἄλλο ζῶον αἰεὶ γινόμενον ἐσδύσται ἐπὶ αὐτῷ δὲ περὶ αὐτῶν πάντα τὰ χερσαῖα, καὶ τὰ θαλάσσια, καὶ τὰ πτηνὰ, αὐτὴς ἐν ἀνθρώπῳ σῶμα γινόμενον ἐσδύνει τὴν περὶ αὐτὴν γένεσιν ἐν τρισχιλίοισιν ἔτησι. Τούτῳ τῷ λόγῳ ἔισιν οἱ Ἕλληνας ἐχρήσαντο, οἱ μὲν πρότερον, οἱ δὲ ὕστερον, ὡς ἰδίῳ ἑαυτῶν ἔοντι. Τῶν ἐγὼ εἶδώς τε ὄντων, καὶ γεγραμμένων. Euterpe. Lib. II. Cap. 123.—As to the cycle of transmigrations thus to be performed by animal souls, and completed in three thousand years; that point is likely enough to have been purely Egyptian. But the space assumed is somewhat scanty: For if the several creatures, while animated with human souls, lived out their ordinary term, thrice the time would not be half enough, if the multiplicity of the species, and the longevity of some, be considered.

Egyptians,

Egyptians, according to Herodotus, pretended they were the first, who committed to writing this notion of the metempsychosis, or of this particular mode of the super-existence of the human soul. It is plain it must be this conceit, and not the doctrine of the immortality of the soul, simply considered, which he means to say, the Greek writers, whose names he knows, but will not discover, stole from the Egyptians. It is certain that simple doctrine was in writing many ages before the time of Herodotus. Hesiod and Homer, who lived four hundred years before him, speak of the super-existence of the soul, as of a notion generally received, and long established among the Greeks; and their very Theogonia, which is built upon it, is by Herodotus himself, referred to a far more remote antiquity; for he says, (in chapter 53d of the same book,) that the authors, who might be supposed to introduce it first into Greece, were not extant in his time. That the Egyptians, in short, should have been the first, who established the opinion of the immortality of the soul amongst them, while the rest of the world had never once thought of it, is a supposition as unsupported in fact, as it is unphilosophical, and contradictory to the constitution of human nature. This passage might as well be quoted, to prove that the Egyptians first introduced religion too into the world: For all religion

religion supposes the existence of separate spirits, in some state or other. Mankind never adored things inanimate, as inanimate. The worship was always meant to something having intelligence, and power to help or harm them. No religion is conceivable without the notion of a superior invisible power. For, as Mr. Wollaston well observes: "Sure no one did ever pretend to
 " present God by any picture or image. According to Diogenes Laertius, the Egyptians set up ἀγάλματα in their temples, τῷ μὴ εἶδέναι τὴν τῷ Θεῷ μῆρσιν for that very reason, because they did not know his shape; or how to represent him. Their images seem to have been symbols, or hieroglyphics, expressing something of their sense, or opinion concerning him. For, as Maimonides observes, no man ever did, or ever will worship an idol, made of metal, stone, or wood, as that Being, who made heaven and earth." Since then all religion originally, and necessarily, enforced upon the mind of man some idea of an invisible, powerful, and intelligent agent, the transition appears natural, and almost inevitable, to conceive the soul of man to be capable of existing separately in an invisible state; and the notion of a future period of existence to have scarcely been of a later date than the oldest religion. The Egyptians possibly went farther in idolatry than any other nation. But the beginning

ning of it all was an extravagant respect to their departed kindred. In Sir Isaac Newton's short Chronology, Anno a. C. 1002, " Sefac reigns in Egypt, and adorns Thebes, " dedicating it to his father Ammon, by the " name of No-Ammon, or Ammon-No. " Sefac also erected temples and oracles to " his father in Thebes, Ammonia, and " Æthiopia, and caused his father to be " worshiped as a God in these countries." Yet it is not said that Sefac invented religion, or the notion of the immortality of the soul. He grafted the deification of his father's spirit upon these principles already established.

3. It may be said, that these conjectural disquisitions into history, which is buried in the impenetrable darkness of remote antiquity, is allowed to be egregious trifling on both sides: But modern travelers, historians, and approved philosophers may be cited in proof that there are whole nations, who have no notion of a God, of separate spirits, or of the human soul. There have been writers indeed of these several denominations, who have asserted rashly, and without proof, strange things of divers countries, which more sober and accurate accounts from men of less conceit, and more judgment and patient inquiry, have generally disproved. The inhabitants of California, a people as much detached from the rest of mankind, as any other
what-

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whatsoever, have been represented as intractable and ferocious, brutes in the shape of men; yet we have seen the excellent moral principles, the peace, the meekness, the friendship and honesty, that actually reigns among them, in the description of the humane Captain Shelvocke. There are many obvious considerations, that should incline us to suspect the fairness of such relations, as represent men as monsters in distant parts of the world. We have an irrational partiality for ourselves, the practices, and notions peculiar to our own country, and have been sometimes absurd enough not to allow our polite and ingenious neighbours to have any just ideas of government, of religion, or philosophy. With a little degree of candour and discernment, or a better information, we have quickly reversed this hasty sentence. But the farther any people is removed from us in time or place. we are still apt to imagine our superiority over them the greater. Travellers and navigators are too fond of soothing this foolish vanity. Let us examine carefully every disparaging account of this sort, and inquire particularly whether the relater be not interested in representing the people he visited as savage and brutal as possible, to justify his own proceedings among them. He piously meant perhaps to exchange his religious notions with them for what European luxury or avarice require. If he allows them

them some glimmerings of reason, or common humanity, it is owning tacitly they had no commodities to barter with him: Or if they had, he cannot conceal his having used very forcible arguments, to bring them to an exchange. When the Spaniards had inhumanly massacred millions of the poor Americans, they thought it their interest to paint them as black as possible: They worshipped the devil: They offered to him human sacrifices: Their sole delight was in blood and slaughter; in butchering, and eating one another. To tame these monsters, and transform them into men, was certainly a glorious purpose. It is pity we are forced to add, that their great incentive to this generous undertaking was, that America produced gold. Their pride on the other hand, and ambition to magnify the difficulty of the Spanish conquest, betray them at times into contradictory accounts, that do more justice to the character of those cruelly injured nations. "Some writers, says Antonio de Solis, (i) treat the Indians as brutes incapable of reason.—It is true they admired, with simplicity, the appearance of men of a different complexion and habit: They gazed at a beard, as at something monstrous, a thing which nature had not given them: They gave gold for glass: They believed the ex-

(i) Hist. Conq. Mex. L. III. C. 2.

plosion of fire-arms to be lightning, and horses to be wild beasts. All this was the effect of novelty, and does not betoken their want of natural understanding: For though astonishment supposes ignorance, it does not suppose incapacity. God made them rational, and notwithstanding he permitted their blindness, he nevertheless endued them with all the gifts of nature, that were necessary for the preservation of the species, and the perfection of his own work." This account draws nearer to the common standard of human nature, and may be supposed to hold universally.

4. It is not easy to say how far human nature may degenerate in some individuals, under the disadvantage of peculiarly unhappy circumstances. But wherever there is society, and government, be it ever so simple, with laws of any kind, for public peace, and private security, it is hardly conceivable that men should not be forced upon the consideration, whether there be not an invisible power, superior to their own. (k)

This

(k) Yet Mr. Locke, it seems, thought this conceivable, and real matter of fact. His words are these, *Hum. Und. B. I, C. 3. Sect. 9.* "*The virtues whereby the Tounoupinambos believed they merited Paradise were revenge, and eating abundance of their enemies. No acknowledgment of any God, no religion, no worship.*" Is there not a contradiction here either of Mr. Locke, or of the author, whom he quotes? What Being was to give them Paradise for the virtue of revenge? "*Several tribes*
h. 98

This point has been considered at large in Section VII. Again, we must deny them absolutely all power of reflection, if we suppose the idea of some agent, of power, and wisdom greater than human, could fail to be kindled up in the breast of some one of the community, at the sight of the magnificent, beautiful, and terrible appearances exhibited in nature. This idea of their being produced by some mighty, invisible Agent, being once expressed, and communicated to others, must have made so forcible an impression upon the mind, as could hardly again be extinguished. “*The name of God being once mentioned in any part of the world, says Mr. Locke (1), to express a superior, powerful, wise, invisible Being, the suitableness of such a notion to the principle of common reason, and the interest men will always have to mention it often, must necessarily spread it far and wide, and continue it down*

have been discovered in America, says the celebrated Dr. Robertson, which have no idea whatever of a Supreme Being, and no rites of religious worship. Hist. of America, B. IV. P. 381. Let the reflecting reader compare this with the following passage, from the same elegant writer, and judge of their consistency. We can trace this opinion (of the immortality of the soul) from one extremity of America to the other; in some regions more faint and obscure, in others more perfectly developed, but no where unknown. The most uncivilized of its savage tribes do not apprehend death as the extinction of being. All hope for a future and more happy state.——Ibid. P. 387.

(1) B. I. Ch. 4. Sect. 10.

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to all generations." It was sufficient then to have been once started; and is not one of those notions, which can ever be lost. At the end of the preceding paragraph, he says, "*It seems stranger to me, that a whole nation of men should be any where found so brutish, as to want the notion of a God; than that they should be without any notion of numbers, or fire.*"

5. An author writing of the conversion of a savage nation, (m) and telling us he found they had no name in their language for God, or the human soul; should first persuade us to believe he is completely master of the meaning of every word in the language of a nation, with which he never had the least intercourse, a little before. How can he pretend to have such positive assurance of a circumstance, of so difficult investigation as this? Have they no name, no notion of some Being superior to man, in power and knowledge, affecting their minds with hope or fear? Though it should appear so confused, so blended with absurdity, and idle fictions, as to be far enough from answering the philosophical idea of the Supreme Being; an impartial and judicious relator would recollect that many na-

(m) *Nicholaus del Techo*, in his letters *ex Paraguaría de Caiaguarum conversione*, has these words: *Reperi eam gentem nullum nomen habere quod Deum, aut hominis animam significet. Nulla sacra habet, nulla idola.*

tions, and the bulk of mankind in all, have an extremely imperfect notion of God, to whom it would yet be doing great injustice to deny their having any notion of him at all. And as to the human soul, it seems rather to have been an egregious misapplication of learning and philosophy, as in the instances of Democritus, Epicurus, Lucretius, than gross ignorance, that made it ever be denied, or doubted. Let us, in short, look up, with reverential awe, and gratitude to heaven, which has vouchsafed to us a more perfect knowledge of the true God; and brought life and immortality, more immediately and clearly to light; without laying much stress upon these exaggerated accounts, and disparaging comparisons. These relaters, being their own historians, remind us of the Fable of the Statue of a man bestriding a vanquished Lion. Could these injured people tell their own tale, a fair comparison of both accounts would be a curiosity indeed. In short, without turning aside to these unknown, or at best, uncertain instances of the extreme degeneracy of human nature, about which we have no sufficient warrant to reason at all; we need not dispute, whether what we have here applied, upon substantial grounds, to humanity in general, will hold good of it, in the wretched state of degradation there supposed. Neither is it necessary to inquire whether the ideas of a Supreme First-Cause,

and the immortality of the soul were innate in the mind of the first man, (n) or supernaturally inspired into him: It is sufficient that we have found them capable of being clearly investigated by human reason: And where they have once taken place, to suppose that ideas, most frequently, and forcibly inculcated by nature and habit, can ever after be utterly lost, is much the same thing as to imagine that a people having a language of their own, might forget it entirely, while they have daily occasion to speak it. If any man will make this supposition to keep an argument on foot, we can only tell him, that on his side there is but weak and suspected testimony; and on the other, more sober and credible testimony, supported by the strongest reason.

(n) According to Aristotle *Διὰ Θεῶν ἡμῶν εὐρίστηκιν*. Lib. de Mundo. Cap. II.

THE END.



T O

T H E R E A D E R.

AN endeavour to rescue the precious remains here collected from dispersion, and utter loss, to the danger of which they had been left exposed, like the leaves of the Cumæan Sibyl, has given some trouble; which has been amply compensated by the highest satisfaction to the mind of the Editor. How far he has succeeded, in arranging them, so, as to make them speak the true sense of their admired Author, or preserve the just expression of his peculiar spirit, must be left to the determination of the judicious Reader. If it shall be found that he has in any degree fallen short of this, he is well aware that all the labour he has here bestowed, will stand him in little stead with the public. All who have ever seen, and are able to form a right judgment of the state of Mr. *Baxter's* Manuscripts, will readily give testimony to the very discouraging prospect there was, in the undertaking to put this work in such order, as might, in any de-

gree, stand the test of a severe examination. A most excellent judge in particular, who is himself engaged in a defence of the same cause, which is here maintained, pronounced the attempt as unpromising, as it was certainly arduous. No part of the writings relative to the subject here discussed, except what has been placed under the first Section, in which it was thought proper that very little alteration should be made, has been esteemed fit for the public inspection, in their original form. Throughout all the rest, it was found indispensibly necessary to cast anew many passages, to lop redundancies in some, and to supply deficiencies in others. Anxiously impressed with a sense of this necessity, and of the great caution requisite in offering to the world a work left very imperfect by an Author, of established reputation, the Editor has studied carefully to discharge his trust, as nearly as possible, in the manner he apprehends the Author himself would have been content to see it executed. The sentence printed in Italics, at the beginning of the last paragraph of the Letter subjoined, will plead his apology for engaging in a work of so much difficulty, and fully justify the solicitude his worthy Friend, Mr. *Alexander Baxter*, has shewn to see his Father's work made public. It is a sufficient proof, that in the last hours of his valuable life, the wish nearest
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the heart of that excellent man was to see this work digested, and completed for publication. The world, it is feared, will find occasion to lament, that heaven was not pleased to grant his dying wish. If, after all, it's approbation shall ensure to this performance the success of his benevolent and pious purpose, to him be all the honour. If that shall be denied, let the Editor alone be blamed.



A LETTER *from* Mr. BAXTER,

Author of "An Inquiry into the Nature of the Human Soul;" of "Matho, or Cosmotheoria puerilis;" and of "The Evidence of Reason in proof of the Immortality of the Soul independent on the more abstruse Inquiry into the Nature of Matter and Spirit;"

To JOHN WILKES, *Esq;*

My dearest Mr. WILKES,

YOUR Letter of December the 12th alarmed me, by hearing you had got such a dangerous fall off your horse. Moderate exercise is good, but dangerous exercise, such as riding a fiery horse, is not commendable; and if you would oblige Mrs. Wilkes, if you would oblige all your friends, and all good men, who conceive great hopes from you, you will be more cautious for the future. We had a terrible instance in the news-papers lately of a man
spoke

spoke wonderfully well of, who got his death by such a fall.

As to altering any thing in the Address to you before the Appendix, I durst not do it without your participation; unless you had suggested something, you would have had changed: and by this time I suppose it is published. If not, I beg you cause change any thing you think proper. I wrote to Mr. Millar, after presenting some copies to gentlemen in London, to send down five copies of it to Lord Blantyre at Edinburgh, to be given to particular friends there, and I wish you would speak to him of it. As to the state of my disease, unless I would make suppositions contrary to all probability, I have no reasonable hopes of recovery, the swelling which began at my legs, being now got up to my belly and head. I am a trouble to all about me, especially to my poor wife, who has the life of a slave night and day, in helping me to take care of a diseased carcase. Yet I may linger on a while, as I can still walk a little through the room, and divert myself now and then with reading, nay, and writing down my remarks on what I read. But I can with sincerity assure you, (my most dear Mr. Wilkes,) death has nothing terrible to me, or rather, I look upon it with pleasure. I have long and often considered, and written down, the advantages of a separate state. I shall soon know more than
all

all the men I leave behind me ; wonders in material nature, and the world of spirits, which never entered into the thoughts of philosophers. The end of knowledge there, is not to get a name, or form a new sect, but to adore the power and wisdom of the Deity. This kills pride, but heightens happiness and pleasure. All our rational desires, because rational, must be satisfied by a Being himself infinitely rational. I have been long aware that nothing can go beyond the grave, but the habits of virtue and innocence. There is no distinction in that world, but what proceeds from virtue, or vice. Titles and riches are laid off when the shroud goes on. But O, my dearest friend, I cannot conceal from you a topic of inexpressible pleasure. Punishment itself is pleasant. God does not punish out of anger and revenge, to destroy ; as we wrathful men conclude ; but to correct and make better. That is the true end of punishment. Boundless punishment would shew uncontrollable power, but chastisement in proportion to our faults, shews the divine perfection of equity ; and with a design to correct, not to throw us off, shews mercy. The end of God's punishing us therefore is our final happiness. Are not these comfortable topics at the approach of death ?—Besides, what is it to be free from the pains and infirmities of the body ? Though I am satisfied just now, that the

6 weakness

weakness of my distressed limbs is as much the immediate effect of the same power and goodness, as their growth and strength was sixty years ago. Dare I add a word without being thought vain? This is owing to my having reasoned honestly on the nature of that dead substance *matter*. It is as utterly inert, when the tree flourishes, as when the leaf withers. And it is the same divine power differently applied, that directs the last parting throb, and the first drawing breath. O the blindness of those, who think matter can do any thing of itself, or perform an effect without impulse or direction by immaterial power!—As to party-philosophers, who are for one side only, and contract a personal dislike to those who are not as stiff, they are to be pitied. I see them making their court to the heads of the party, and thus angling for a little reputation, at second hand. It is astonishing, my dear Sir, that all men are forced to own, that all matter necessarily resists a change of it's present state, either of rest or motion; and yet when they come to the genuine consequence of this, to wit, that the Deity performs immediately all that is done in the material universe, they retract the former self-evident truth, and ascribe to this resisting substance, both a self-motive and self-determining power. I know not one book of natural philosophy, not one, free from this inconsistency. And though I be the
only

only person, (for any thing I know,) who has endeavoured to establish the particular providence of the Deity, and shew his incessant influence and action on all the parts of matter, through the wide universe, from the inactivity of this dead substance: yet I hope, when the present party zeal subsides a little, men will come more easily in to own such a plain truth: And from the same obvious principle, a great many absurd notions in natural philosophy, concerning powers in matter, will be rejected.

I own, if it had been the will of heaven, I would have gladly lived, till I had put in order the second part of the Enquiry, shewing the immortality of the human soul: But infinite wisdom cannot be mistaken in calling me sooner. Our blindness makes us form wishes. I have left seven or eight different manuscript books, where all the materials I have been collecting, for near thirty years, are put down, without any order, in the book that came next to hand, in the place or circumstances I was in at the time. I took all these papers to Holland with me, thinking to put them in order there; but you know that was impracticable. And since I came home I have been prevented, either with looking after country affairs, or want of health. There are a great many miscellaneous subjects in philosophy, of a very serious nature, few of them ever considered before, as I know of. But, (as I hinted above)

A LETTER from Mr. BAXTER. 459

above,) a short time of separate existence will make every good man look with pity on the deepest researches we make here, and which we are apt to be vain of.——Thus I have writ you every thing I had to say. It will be kind, if you send me a last letter. I wish you and Mrs. Wilkes all possible prosperity. And though I cannot do you any service here, yet I hope our friendship shall never end.

Whittingham,
(a) Jan. 29th, 1750.

ANDREW BAXTER.

(a) He died about six weeks after, in the March following.

